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ON THE COVER:

Steven Frossard getting ready for the opening MX1 GP in Qatar...

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© Sarah Gutierrez

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COMMENT

If you bought this copy of DBR at Tesco or WHSmith chances are – unless some scrote's nicked it – you've got a limited edition Hawkstone International programme in your hands n'all. If you're confused as to why we'd give you a programme for an event that never happened just think of it as a piece of motocross memorabilia that's unobtainable absolutely anywhere else.

It's not just programmes from cancelled events that get discarded – there are a million and one items in this sport that get produced and then never see the light of day for one reason or another. I mean, just think about all those celebration t-shirts that get printed for champions in waiting who then fail to seal the deal for whatever reason. It's not just t-shirts either – there are posters, postcards and even celebration cakes that get binned just because somebody's gearbox blows (Mel Pocock) or they get passed in the last corner by somebody who's not even in their class (Billy MacKenzie).

Now you might think that I'm having a pop at Steve Dixon here as the two riders I've mentioned were key members of his team when they failed to win the titles that were well within their grasp but that's just not the case – they're simply two instances that popped into my head. You can guarantee though that a team boss as thorough as Steve will have made the effort to get those celebration items sorted and right now they'll be tucked away in a corner of his workshop gathering dust – or they would if Dixon allowed dust to gather at Monster Energy Yamaha HQ in Hampshire.

Anyhoo, for each of those losers there had to be a winner and in the case of the Hawkstone International getting culled the big winner there was the final round of the Arenacross series that picked up a whole heap of last minute ticket sales as disappointed dirt bike fans searched high and low to get their motocross fix. Some might claim the freak weather conditions that battered the Shropshire venue were fuelled by karma as the HIMX crew shifted the date of their event to clash with E22 Sports' final indoor spectacular but I don't believe in that sh*t. What I do believe in is that Hawkstone was called off while Liverpool went off!

There's no denying that the Monster Energy backed Arenacross championship has gone a long way to bring motocross to the masses –

even if they were encouraged to come on the premise of seeing backflips and stunts rather than bar-to-bar race action. But the point is no matter what got them there in the first place once inside the well-dressed arenas the crowd – many of whom were obviously newcomers to the sport – had a great time and will more than likely be back next year.

But why aren't they coming to races like the Red Bull Pro Nationals that basically offer up the same heady mix of FMX and hardcore racing as well as chucking family favourites like Fireman Sam and Peppa Pig into the mix?

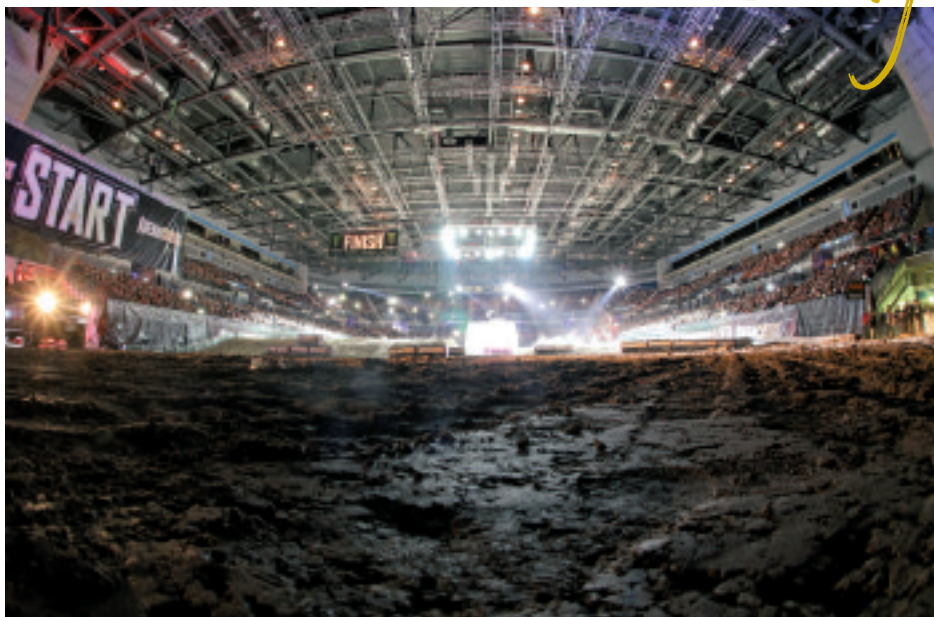
In my mind one of the biggest problems with current championship events is the overwhelming amount of race action that goes off over a weekend. I mean, a Maxxis round starts with qualifying at 9am and ends with the last MX1 race crossing the line at around 5pm. That's a long day by anyone's standards and although at just £20 to get in it offers great value for money – compared to a 90-minute football match that costs way more – it's a big chunk of free time to commit to for a family who might not really know what they're going to.

The length of day and number of races could also be why we see a steady stream of spectators leaving the circuit after the first block of races. That means the majority of 'fans' go home without a clue of who's won the overall and when asked by their mates the next day what they did at the weekend have to admit to leaving before the event was over. If somebody told you that they left a film before the end you'd assume it was crap and you'd not bother going watching it yourself, right?

While it's not so easy to mix up the Maxxis – it's the official British Championship and if you change the way it's run the world might just stop spinning or something – it'd be relatively easy to make something like the Pro Nationals even more spectator friendly with just a few minor tweaks to the programme.

It's always worth remembering at times like these that a smart promotional team totally turned around the fortunes of the British Super Bike series by ignoring tradition and doing what was right for their own championship – maybe it's time somebody in off-road circles tried the same...

Sutton



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Jeffrey Herlings claimed to have hurt himself in the run up to the first GP

MacNEWS UNDI!

FRYING SCOTSMAN IRN BRY MACKENZIE RISES TO THE CHALLENGE AND STEPS IN FOR AN INJURED SUTTDAGW...

It may come as a surprise – or it may not to all you grammar Nazis out there – but I never done very good at English at high school. My greatest achievement in English at school was being the first guy in class to listen to the radio without getting caught – I discreetly ran the headphones from the jack up my sleeve and into my ear. But here I am though taking on written work for a popular magazine – who'd a thunk it? Definitely not the faculty anyway, that's for sure.

By now we will know how the first GP of the 2013 season has gone down. With the pre-season internationals and the Italian championship giving us an indication already how most of the GP front runners are shaping up after the winter, on-track action aside there's also a lot of other questions that await to be answered with great anticipation. How will these new rules for the overseas races work out? How was the

combined race in the opinion of the riders after the initial test – for better or for worse? And how was the first floodlit night race MXGP?

The novelty of a night race under lights has never been done before in the World championship but it has been attempted before in a series of equal magnitude as our brothers across the Atlantic have given it a go – they ran the Thunder Valley national in its first two years in the evening. The first year, if I remember rightly, received a lot of criticism of the lighting being too poor with shadows cast big enough for street prowlers to hide in them! The second year they ended up with their first motos being run at dusk and only the second motos being under much more intense lighting than the previous year. But now that National is run in the daytime you have to assume that they decided it wasn't such a great idea and so we can only hope that the FIM have

done a small amount of research to learn from the AMA's mistakes.

Livia Lancelot is about to make history by being the first chick racer to compete in back-to-back Grands Prix. She isn't the first female to give it a go and venture into the realms of MXGP though as Stefy Bau and Mariana Balbi have already beaten her to it but she is definitely the first to think it's a good idea to do it twice.

There's the small issue of the new format to contend with though as just to qualify for the qualifying races to qualify for the main GP races on Sunday she needs to clock a time equal to at least 108 per cent of the average time of the top 10 recorded during the Pre-Qualifying Practice... comprende?

Basically she needs to not be as slow as sh*t to even be allowed into the qualifying race. But truth be told all that might not even apply to her as it seems that the FIM rulebook was tattooed on

to the back of an Italian gymnast and can easily be bent to suit Luongo's want. Yup, there's the small matter of her age being disregarded and her entry into MX2 accepted when she's 25 and it's a class for under 23 year olds. So maybe there's hope for all of us 'washed up' MX2ers yet as with a sun bed tan, face full of make up and a pretty frock we could maybe persuade Giuseppe into letting us ride, too.

Jeffrey Herlings tweeted only days before the opening GP 'might have fu'ked it up only three days before the season starts' and went to hospital as he feared the worst after a practice crash in where he gave himself a gnarly dead leg. The outcome was just bruising but it was enough to change the young renegade's mentality for the opening race from world domination to damage limitation as he later stated "Definitely won't fight for the win. Top five in MX2 is my goal if I can make it to



MAC211

RACE TIME!

THE SEASON GETS OFF TO AN OKAY START FOR OUR MAN BILLY...

Words by Billy MacKenzie Photo by Johnny Douglas Hamilton

So it was kinda strange being back at a race this weekend. I raced the first round of the NZ Motocross championships on the south island near Timaru. The track was amazing but the vibe of the meeting was like being back at Leuchars! There weren't many people there so I started off just treating it like a practice day. I didn't really put much effort in till the final race when I realised I needed to get my act in gear!

First race I missed the pick for gates so I had a sh*t start and got roosted for most of the race. I had forgotten how much attention I used to pay to making my rut perfect and being down there first! I rode around and just got a feel for things, the track was a little tricky in places and I was taking a bit longer than normal getting used to the bike in race conditions.

Second race I was again a little lazy with the start. I let my mechanic pick my gate for me and he put me a little too wide. I got out in the top five and pushed my way to the front only to have the race red flagged as the gates flinched and some of the riders just stayed behind the gate!

Townley had also had a big one so we restarted and I got a sh*tty start again but pushed through and was riding averagely okay. I was in second place for most of the race after Townley went out and Waters' subframe came loose. I was an easy second but I got a strange pit board with a lap to go which confused me and Gibbs passed me with a few corners to go – I was pissed off.

For the last race I made some bike changes and it was miles better. I picked my own gate this time so holeshot and tried checking out in the beginning. Waters stayed with me but from reports was pretty loose and revving the bike a

lot. I felt like I was riding really well and my heart rate was definitely getting up there. There was a few times I thought of backing it down but pushed for a good three or four laps until I made a little mistake and Waters got me. After that we both backed it down as we were miles ahead of third place and the track was getting a bit sketchy in places. I knew I had second overall so I just brought it home.

All in all I had a good feeling and a solid result so will try a bit harder at the next round. It was weird being back at the races and in a position to be competitive so I'll take all the positives from a weekend that I really let just come to me. The last race was a lot like my old self and it's given me that buzz to push for the front again.

It was nice to catch up with some old Scottish friends too, former schoolboy 125 champ Barry Morris was there riding and still enjoying racing and little Johnny had made a trek over from the UK to enjoy warmer climates. He's taken up a new hobby – photography – so the image you see above is off little JDH.

The whole three weeks I have been staying with Coppins and putting in some solid hours on the bike. His set up here in NZ is pretty spectacular – 55 acres of rolling greens hills with full on motocross and supercross tracks with built in watering systems. There are 360 degree mountain and ocean views and he also has a garage full of toys. The guy knows how to set himself up that's for sure so I've taken full advantage of the position I'm in and I'm really happy to strike a deal with Josh to help me prepare for the Aussie nationals this year.

BD1211



the gate anyway. Will be in big pain." We all hope the defending champ's ego doesn't get in the way and he can soak some of that pain up which will allow him to race.

Matiss Karro is also trading blows again with lady luck. After overcoming a gnarly crash at the Swedish GP eight months ago that put him out for the second half of the 2012 season he got one pre-season international under his belt at Valence before grenading himself again while practicing in Lommel. It sounded pretty serious as there was an operation involved and a five to six week healing time which will most likely force him out of the first two GPs and opening pair of Maxxis British championship rounds. Luckily team boss Stevie Turner still had J-Law's number on speed dial and Jamie will be lining up for the first two GPs in Karro's place.

The Maxxis British championship promoters have recently announced they are cutting back on who has the right to film and release edits of this year's British championship. In this day and age it's no surprise as many other forms of sport have been at it for years banning people/punters from filming live action so the media partners get their money's worth. It's not as bad as it sounds though as it's not completely watertight and there is going to be more than one man and his camera allowed to film at these events and put out online edits but it's said to be permission is only allowed through direct association with the series – or partners – and can only be released in a certain order.

If you can't wait for the season opener at FatCat to see who's up to what and get a feel for who the main players are going to be come the first round of the Maxxis British championship then I suggest you head along there on a week day in the weeks leading up to March 17. You will no doubt find a host of British championship regulars out testing settings and trying to get accustomed to the red sand and looking for an advantage. Any given Wednesday resembles a watered down first round there at the moment.

On the home front the SMXF Scottish Nationals kicked off in mid February and – in a shameless plug – the Pendrich Kawasaki team managed to take out four of the six podium places that were on offer in MX1 and MX2. Myself and Bunga – that's Ross Rutherford – went 1-2 in MX1 while myself and Mark Perfect finishing 1-3 in MX2. 🐾



A lesser spotted Maxxis videographer doing what it likes to do best...



WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN!

AN AWESOME ALIAS MX RACE PACKAGE UP FOR GRABS

It's that time of year and the new season's here so make sure you're ready go racing with this Bobby Dazzler Alias race package that includes a set of Alias A1 racewear as well as a tee and hoodie to chill out in between motos.

The Alias brand has really caused a ruckus since its launch last year and is flying out of shops quicker than discounted pies from the Tesco in Morecambe's Arndale centre on deadline week. Unlike those tasty treats though the Alias swag is guaranteed to make you look cooler and will help you go fast on the track and not just to the toilet. Bad pies!

To be in with a chance of winning this spectacular prize package we want you to answer an oh-so simple question. Which Alias athlete defied death at the

Dallas supercross when he survived the sickest crash of the season so far?

Was it:

- A:** Zach Bell
- B:** Zach Osborne
- C:** Zach Galifianakis
- D:** Alexander Graham Bell

If you know the answer log on to our website – www.dirtbikerider.com – and follow the competitions link in **dirtZone** – or you can scan this **QR code** with your smartphone and it'll take you right there. The first correct answer randomly drawn from the stack of correct answers on April 4 will have the prize delivered directly to their door by a postman!



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YAKETY YAK

CHILL FACTOR!

JAKE'S BACK IN EUROPE AND PRETTY CHEESED OFF BY THE BIG FREEZE – AND INDECISIVE FRENCH RACE ORGANIZERS...

Words by Jake Nicholls Photo by Sarah Gutierrez

Man it's so cold! Wouldn't you like a pound for every time you've said that recently? I know I'm pretty over the weather being less than four degrees all the time! I hope you're all doing okay though. I had a shock the first few days I got back into the swing of things in Europe. I had two full days at home in the UK to catch up with everyone – including Jeff – and then I had to come out here to Belgium for our team photos and presentation.

If I'm honest I've never really worried about coming over here – I'm normally quite excited actually – but I think the mix of being tired, missing home and Jeff a lot plus the fact that Blu was staying in the UK for the first couple of weeks made this time quite the opposite. Packing the night before my 4am start I was pretty over it – I've had a wicked off season at home and the thought of not being back there until July is pretty whack. That said, I really want to race the Lyng British Championship round this year so all going well I may be there!

For those wondering how I survived without Blu being over here I'll have you know it was fine. It's actually caused me some trouble as she kept asking for a picture of the dinners I made myself and she realized they weren't too bad so she's now got it in mind that I can cook every now and again – fail!

I have to admit that when I walked into our Belgium home for the first time since October last year it was quite refreshing and it brought the mindset of its time to race – I got quite excited and motivated from it. It did help too that I text neighbour Johan Boonen the day before and asked him if he would kindly wind the heating up ahead of my return.

The first two full days here I was greeted with relentless rain but the third day we were able to ride in Germany in a gigantic hole in the ground that had a semi frozen deep sand track and half the GP paddock in it. Getting changed was hard enough and after my first 15 minutes on the track Werner came over to me with a worried face – he said "hmm, it's not so good eh?". I laughed and explained how I didn't expect it to be as I've been riding in 30 degrees and hardpack hilly/jumpy tracks for the last five weeks then I came back to a rutted muddy sand track with snow on the sides. I was 18 seconds a lap slower than my rivals that first session and I laughed it off but deep down I was a bit like oh man! At the end of the day though I found my groove and was on the pace.

That weekend both riders and mechanics packed our lives into a box van for eight days down in Marseille. We had an awesome week and rode some cool tracks. I put some serious laps in and a lot of training too.

Jacky came down midweek and we tested suspension and I feel we improved the bike leaps and bounds. We had a day of rest then it was Valence that weekend which was only an hour north from the hotel we were staying at. I forgot what hotel life was like and it was good to get to know my new mechanic more – we were in a matchbox hotel room so we didn't have much choice.

Valence went well for me, we improved the bike some more and Golden Tyre gave me some brilliant tyres. I was fast in qualifying and I won both the MX2 races and I was riding very comfortably and not getting out of shape. My fitness was very good and I felt like I had room to push harder.

In the final race of the day we were mixed with MX1. I muffed up the start and then crashed on lap one. Riding hard from last place I pushed through to 13th at the flag passing one guy in the last corner. It gave me fourth place in MX2 in the race and they announced that I had won the overall. But then just as we were about to get presented with our trophies they changed the results giving me 13th place points in the final race and second overall on the day behind Teillet.

It was unprofessional how they changed it at the last moment but after boiling up for a few hours I understood that the way they eventually scored it (our points mixed with MX1) was how they normally do it. But I left there with a good taste in my mouth, feeling sharp on the bike and knowing that I beat Teillet on that kind of a track straight up gave me a boost as he loves those jumpy French tracks – I do though too.

This week's been a bit of a shambles but I think it's been good to have a few days off the bike after riding so much last week. I had a fitness test on Wednesday which meant I couldn't ride until Thursday and then it decided to freeze. We tried two tracks on Thursday – Eersel then Lommel – and both were frozen although Lommel was not too bad. I did four laps or so and pulled off because I wasn't enjoying it at all and deep down I remembered one of the best bits of advice Josh Coppins ever gave me about practicing – quality not quantity!

I had an awesome day riding the day after in France on a proper track and we tested something on the front end which made the bike so much more stable.

Qatar is next and I can't wait for the warm weather but more than anything I can't wait to race. Thanks for reading and please keep the messages coming in on Twitter and Facebook.

Go hard #45!



LAW MAKER?

HOW KARRO'S CATASTROPHE IS J-LAW'S LUCKY BREAK (AGAIN)...

Just as his STR KTM started its long journey to Qatar for the opening GP of the year long haired Latvian Matiss Karro broke his wrist during training which means he'll miss at least the first two rounds of the world championship if not more. While that's bad news for Matiss it's great news for Jamie Law – and Cumbria's rat population – as the second best pest controller in the Cocker mouth area gets the call up from STR team boss Steve Turner (that's where the S and the T come from while the R is for racing – you heard it here first folks!) to fill in for the foreseeable future.

"It was totally unexpected and I was a little bit shocked to get asked," text Jamie from the departure lounge of Manchester Airport. "I'm a little bit unprepared but it will be more good experience under my belt and great preparation for the Maxxis season opener. Steve says he can't thank me enough for jumping in at short notice (he's reading this over my shoulder) but seeing as though I'm the fastest rider in Little Broughton he really had no option but to call."



LAW BREAKER?

IS LETTING LIVIA RACE GPS EVEN LEGAL?

Apparently Youthstream aren't shy when it comes to defying sexual discrimination legislation as their – sorry, the FIM's – recent rule change to allow women of all ages to race in the MX2 class shows. For the past few years the 250F division has been exclusively for riders who are 23 and under yet when 25 year old Livia Lancelot banged in an entry for the Qatar and Thailand GPs that was soon changed – but still only for women.

There is one other rule that might not see her make it to the start line though and that's the 108 per cent rule that's designed to stop local Rodneys getting in the way of the title hopefuls. Basically what that means is to qualify for moto one your time must be within 108 per cent of the average time of the top 10 riders in timed qualifying. In Valence the average for the top 10 MX2 guys was 1.47 while Lancelot's best was a 1:57 which by my reckoning ain't quite fast enough especially when you consider that the top 10 in Qatar will be of an even higher level.

So unless Livia pulls out a corker of a lap or the FIM change another rule to suit their – sorry, Youthstream's – marketing needs she could well be screwed and is that what we really want? I mean, I personally reckon it'd actually be pretty cool to see her in the main races although of course it would have been even cooler to see current world champ Chiara Fontanesi in there because that would have required no rule bending whatsoever. I for one will be watching Livia's progress closely though and after all it won't be the first time I've followed her ass round a track...

ITALIAN JOB!

KTM CLEAN UP IN ARCO DI TRENTO...

While JN45 and GP21 were getting mugged in France the KTM factory team were dominating the third round of the Italian championship at Arco di Trento in northern Italy. With the fourth round of the FIM world championship headed there in April it was no surprise that the gate was bulging with talent and alongside Tony Cairoli and Ken De Dycker were MX1 title challengers Steven Frossard and Evgeny Bobryshev as well as a whole heap of speedy pasta blasters including 2008 world champ David Philippaerts.

Despite stiff competition Cairoli won the 17-lap MX1 race and sealed the deal in the championship too but there was still everything to play for in the mixed capacity Elite race as he'd be

going up against team-mate Jeffrey Herlings too. The Dutchman meanwhile had easily won the MX2 heat around the gravelly track by a whopping 28 seconds and was looking forward to taking on the MX1 riders in the final showdown.

While Cairoli took the holeshot and settled into the lead, Herlings fought his way through to second quite quickly after gating inside the top 10. Just as it looked like Cairoli would cruise to another victory he clashed with a lapped rider and damaged his shifter and rather than race on and risk injury – or get smoked by Herlings – he pulled out leaving Jeffrey to take the win beating Frossard and De Dycker across the line. Will we also see Herlings beat the MX1 boys in Qatar and Thailand?

Clement Desalle takes top honours in France!



Cairoli leads the Elite race at Arco di Trento



QUELLE SURPRISE!

AGAINST ALL ODDS IT'S DESALLE AND TEILLET WHO TAKE VICTORY IN VALENCE...

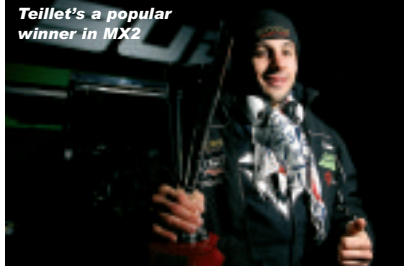
Heading towards the rear of a French industrial estate the Valence motocross circuit is not the most picturesque of places although at least the local road network – which doubles up as the pits at big events like this – is capable of handling even the largest of trucks in all weather conditions. Fortunately the weather is nothing like what Hawkstone Park suffered just one week earlier and conditions in the south of France are actually quite clement for what's now the second major pre-season

international of the year following on from Mantova.

Although it's Rockstar Suzuki's Clement Desalle who stands on top of the podium at the end of the day it's actually Kawasaki Racing Team's Gautier Paulin who's fastest. After winning the opening two MX1 motos quite easily Paulin is once again easing away in the mixed capacity Super Final until his factory KX450F splutters and dies. With Paulin out of the running Desalle takes the top spot overall with his 2-3-2 beating Xavier Boog's 4-4-1 and Tanel Leok's 6-6-3.

In MX2 it's Jake Nicholls who's head n' shoulders above the rest and he goes 1-1 before 'muffing' up the Super Final. Although Jake streaks back through the pack to snatch fourth in class – from Bulgaria's Petar Petrov in the final turn – it's still not enough for him to take the overall as a last-minute decision from the hosting club sees the last race of the day scored as one. The Reverend's 1-1-4 turns into a 1-1-13 and he's outscored by Valentin Teillet who clocks in a 2-3-4 to stand on top of the podium – a result that's popular with the French crowd.

Teillet's a popular winner in MX2



Paulin yanks the holey



Elliot Banks-Browne will be the man to beat in MX2 at FatCat on March 17

BLAST OFF!

THE MAXXIS BRIT CHAMPS FIRE INTO LIFE THIS MONTH WITH BACK TO BACK ROUNDS AT FATCAT MOTOPARC AND CANADA HEIGHTS...

A lesser publication might claim that all roads lead to FatCat Motoparc on **March 17** for the opening round of the Maxxis British motocross championship but that'd be a total lie as everyone knows that only the M18 (or the A630) and Holme Wood Lane will get the job done! But all pedantry aside the message is more or less right – the Maxxis kicks off at FatCat in just a few weeks time! Woop woop!

This year's championship is looking like it's gonna be a corker as one of the best international line ups in recent history is set to battle it out in MX1 while there's a real veterans versus young guns feel to the MX2 division. As well as that there's the MXY2 class to

consider n'all so you know you're gonna gets your moneys worth provided you remember to jump in your car and head to Doncaster for round one.

What makes the opener even specialer, sorry, more special, is the fact that Tommy Searle and Mel Pocock have signed up as wild cards – both are capable of winning but will they? Searle's no stranger to FatCat as he trains there often but with Brad Anderson, Tanel Leok, Steve Ramon, Nico Aubin, Jon Barragan, Bert Krestinov, Jason Dougan and Kristian Whatley all in the mix is he really gonna? Most likely yes but we'll see...

The MX2 entry is headed by the defending champ Elliott Banks-Browne

who'll be running the #1 plate like a good old boy. The 250F division is stacked too and although there's only one GP winner in the mix – veteran Stephen Sword – as opposed to the six entered in the MX1 class the racing should still be super competitive. Pocock's definitely gonna be right up there as will Graeme Irwin, Martin Barr, Neville Bradshaw, Steven Lenoir and the Watson brothers. And before you start I've purposefully left Bryan MacKenzie's name out of that list to further motivate him – I mean, he's definitely one of DBR's top five favourite columnists so we want him to do well, right?

Just one week after FatCat, the championship heads more or less

directly south to Canada Heights in Kent for round – let me check my fingers for a moment... two! A popular stop on the Maxxis tour the racing's always great at the Heights no matter what the weather although personally I'd rather be there in warming spring sunshine than a monsoon. While the levels of moisture in the air can't be predicted a good crowd can and the atmosphere at this early round is really not to be missed so make sure you're there. If you don't already know Canada Heights is just off junction three of the M25. The postcode is BR8 8DX.

More information on the Maxxis British Motocross Championship can be found at the series' official home on the internet www.mxgb.co.uk.

RANDOMNESS!

STIFF AND SORE FROM A WEEKEND AT THE RACES IRN BRY TURNS TO HIS FANS FOR A LITTLE RANDOM INSPIRATION...

Words by Bryan MacKenzie

Below is a primary school picture from 1995 – the year I won the 60cc British championship. That's me in the front row on the far left (as you look at it) and my mate Clydie is sat next to me. It's quite easy to pick Billy out but if you're struggling he's the one with the green cotton Fox race shirt on like the one I should have been wearing too. We had arranged to both wear race tops but I got grief for it and wasn't allowed. Funny how they couldn't have got us any further away from each other.

It's Monday. The first Monday after a race weekend in five months and the first Monday in a long line of Mondays that I'm gonna be in this position – I have to peel myself out of bed and endure the pain of stiffness and aches from the weekend's pounding and then get through a mountain of kit and clothes to wash. I also have a stack of sh*t to do online, I have to go cycling and I need to fulfil my household duties. But also for this Monday and this Monday only, I need to write my column which is the hardest job.

The problem with it being today is that with my current inability to physically function and with all of the 'awesome' jobs I have to look forward to it amounts to a massive lack of enthusiasm and therefore creativity. My brain is working at the same speed my body is and that isn't very fast.

I could easily just write more about the same old stuff like riding, the racing season coming etc but where's the fun in that? Apparently my column makes for quality toilet or brew and biscuit break reading and I'm flattered – I think – that you guys associate me with taking a sh*t so I'm trying to keep up my form.

So although this maybe a lazy way of coming up with something I thought I could put it to you guys to inspire me. So I hit up my Facebook and Twitter accounts and turned it over to you to pick my topic of conversation and I had a load of decent suggestions from a varied bunch of folk ranging from family, friends, fans and even a dude that I've traded paint with for a few years in MX2 – Stuey Edmonds. So here goes...

One of the suggestions was about the new Krispy Kreme drive-thru store that came to Edinburgh in February. Scotland doesn't need any more encouragement to be unhealthy and then they go and drop a drive-thru doughnut store into the equation where you don't even have to walk for the bloody things and if you don't order yours by the dozen then you're only delaying the guy behind you from doing so!

It's taking what seems like 24/7 policing to keep it all reasonably under control because have you ever seen one Scotsman get in the way of another in a quest to get a doughnut? Neither have I but I can bet it would be worse than a lion fight in the Serengeti.

Cars are constantly queued up and it's effecting the traffic on the main Edinburgh bypass as it spills over into the roundabout at one of the busiest around town. It's such a pain in the ass and I haven't managed to figure out the busiest times so I can avoid getting caught out by the overspill of traffic.

So there's clearly a lot of people passionate about doughnuts and this one store is having a massive effect on the capital. At this rate in years to come it might be easily distinguished as the epicentre of a great Scottish obesity epidemic. Or I suppose you never know what these doughnut loving maniacs are doing with 12 iced doughnuts, it could inspire a UK version

of American Pie – Scottish Doughnut!

Another suggestion was from one of my old school mates, Clydie. He wanted me to elaborate on a story that to be honest I have no memory of. Apparently I peed on a ramp he had made for us to shred on our BMX bikes and then we made his gran carry it home – I'm assuming without telling her! Ah well, I'm over that stage of my life now and I don't do that kind of thing any more.

I do remember the time that he started at our desk in primary school though and then tried to pass the buck on to me! There was not a chance I was gonna roll over and get branded as the kid who sh*t himself while trying to times 16 by 2 and so I took it all the way. We got the brainiest kid in the class over to be the judge and the jury and had a full on court case. Luckily I was acquitted of all accusations and Clydie got the title that was rightfully his.

A pal of mine, Montana, just reminded me of a bizarre deal that took me by surprise at my first race of the season. It was the final race of a long weekend at the first round of the Scottish Nationals at this real gnarly sand track up in the Highlands. I rode MX2 on Saturday and my KX250F again in the National (open) class on Sunday.

The track was by far the roughest track I'll be on this year and I was getting into the last four laps of the final moto of the weekend and had a built up a pretty good lead. Remembering what I learnt from the last round of the British Championship last year where I thought I had built up a big enough lead to play it safe for the rest of the moto only to be caught and beat, I was putting into practice the art of trying not to settle and relax but instead push, push, push all the way to the flag.

However, after two days of sand hopping, as much as my brain and wrist wanted to twist, my legs and back had posted a memo of fatigue to my brain that was taking it's time to get there. As I got on the gas out of a sweet left-hander I didn't manage to stand up fast enough and caught the first bump still sat on the seat! Wow, I got hustled by that bitch for what seemed like minutes and eventually managed to crash – although I was still rubber side down! I swapped out so many times and came to a stop laid up against the bank at the side of the track. I didn't even leave the seat of the bike or let go of the bars and only had to fire a few kicks into her and away I went again. Well if Carlsberg done crashing...

Well thank you all for giving me something to write about other than training, practicing, eating and all that jazz that we've all been getting up to leading to this point but finally after looking through tens and tens of comments and tweets thanks to Dale Childs for his input towards the appropriate ending to this episode – the end.



UK SUBS!

GET DBR DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR AND SAVE SOME CASH TOO...

If you're a bit lazy – or a total shut-in like The Bear's second cousin twice removed Grizzly Dave – you probably find walking to the shops a bit of a chore, get your weekly shop delivered directly to your door and know the Domino's driver better than you do your own family. And if you do resemble that description we can help save you some more energy by popping a hot-off-the-press copy of the mag through your letterbox each month – and we'll even save you money and send you a free gift n'all. Sound good?

To take advantage of this ridiculously great offer you just need to call our Subscriptions hotline on 0844 292 0216 and tell 'em where you live, hand over your card details and then choose a free gift from the Duck Smart Micro Cleaning Kit range – Sniki Clean (for your trainers), Kit Clean (for your riding kit) or Helmet Clean (that one's for your penis – just kidding, it's for your riding helmet). For more details on them log on to www.ducksmart.co.uk or to see our full range of subscriptions deals visit www.dirtbikerider.com/go/subs/dbr



HAWKSTONE OFF!

RAIN STOPS ALL PLAY AT THE PARTY IN THE PARK...

Despite all efforts from event promoters HIMX the Hawkstone International just had to be cancelled as masses of rain flooded the venue in the days leading up to the pre season clash of the MX titans leaving the pits under water and the track a soggy mess! Fortunately for most of the entered riders the decision not to run was made early enough for them not to make it to the circuit and some even managed to sneak a last minute entry into final round the Arenacross series that was happening on the very same day.

Two intrepid travellers that couldn't be stopped in time were Georges Jobe's children – Maite and Vic – who had come to visit the circuit their father had spoken about so many times. With the recent death of the five-time world champion the Hawkstone event was to be run in his honour although the bad weather put an end to that. Vic and Maite still got to see the circuit though and were given a guided tour of the soggy venue by the HIMX team and event sponsor Alan Bott of Pemberton Tyres. The plucky pair promised to return next year to see some racing...

UPGRADE!

NEW BEGINNINGS FOR E22

On the back of the very successful Arenacross series Events 22 are launching a whole new website for the sporting side of their company. The plan is that

www.e22sports.com will become the #1 portal on the world wide web for all the promotional company's moto activities – including the Red bull Pro Nationals and Arenacross UK championship. Check it out now and you can sign up for updates n' tings.

SPRINT START

BSEC READY TO RUMBLE

The Husqvarna British Sprint Enduro Championship is set to burst into life on the first weekend of April at the hugely popular Chavenage Farm in Gloucestershire. Two new classes are added to the series and alongside the now well-established Elite, Expert, Under 23, Under 19, 125cc Youth Cup and Women's classes will be Expert Vets and Clubman Vets categories. Added following requests from competitors the series which both starts and finishes a little later in the year compared to previous seasons will also mix both two and one-day events for the first time.

Starting in Gloucestershire before heading to Mid Wales and on to Monmouth the championship will venture further north than ever before stopping off at Westwood between Sheffield and Barnsley before ending at the end of August/beginning of September close to Banbury.

Entries are now open so head to www.enduro-sprint.com for more info.

2013 BSEC SCHEDULE

Round 1/2 April 6/7
Chavenage Farm, Tetbury, Gloucester, **GL8 8XU**
Round 3 May 26
Saints Well, Mid Wales, **LD1 6PT**
Round 4/5 July 6/7
Llangrove, near Monmouth, **NP25 5RT**
Round 6 August 4
Westwood, near Sheffield, **S75 3DL**
Round 7/8 August 31/Sept 1
Chacombe, near Banbury, **OX17 2JR**

JONTY'S BOX

DEAD CERT?

IS PLACING A PILE OF CASH ON MANX DOMINATION IN THE EWC A SAFE BET? JONTY SEEMS TO THINK SO...

Words and photo by Jonty Edmunds

I'm not really a gambling man but lately I've been keen to take a punt on something. And by my reckoning the odds are stacked in my favour...

The opening rounds of the FIM Enduro World Championship are just about to begin and for the first time ever Great Britain – well, the Isle of Man actually – has a genuine chance of securing at least 50 per cent of the titles on offer. Even though there are only three British riders officially committed to the entire EWC season all three of them have a realistic shot at attaining their respective titles.

In the Enduro 2 class we've got David Knight gunning for glory on his privately back Honda while the McCanney brothers – Danny and Jamie – are expected to feature up the sharp end of the Enduro Junior and the Youth Cup classes with Gas Gas and Husaberg. For an Island with only 80,000 inhabitants, that's pretty good going.

If pre-season form is anything to go by I think we can welcome back the David Knight of old into the fold. After two tough years plagued by injury and problems the Manxman is firing on all cylinders again. They say a change can be as good as a rest and with Knight going it alone with Honda it seems that move has done him the world of good.

Looking rejuvenated and highly motivated he's been grafting hard since taking delivery of his Hondas in late November. Having never left the podium in any of the SuperEnduro races he's contested, plus adding the British Extreme Enduro Championship to his long list of national titles, the Manxman looks comfortable in his new role as a non-factory backed rider. But it's in Chile and Argentina when we'll get a true indication of form as all the top dogs of E2

converge. As ever, the class is stacked with multiple world champions all hungry for the number one plate but with Knight benefiting from having Paul Edmondson in his corner he may just have the edge on everyone else.

While Knight is an old hand at season openers the McCanney brothers are really only just rookies in the sport. Both start their second year of EWC and are still only learning the ropes.

As the third placed EJ finisher 2012 Danny faces his biggest challenge to date as he makes his bid for the Enduro Junior World title. Having shown in the past that he is capable of winning races the 21-year knows that 2013 is his time to deliver. By competing in as many hard enduro races as possible while also spending time in Spain, he's worked hard to improve all aspects of his game. Knowing that the majority of the series will be spent in dry and dusty going it's those extra days training in Spain that may pay dividends as the season progresses.

For Jamie, he's just hoping that Chile will fair better than it did 12 months ago. Getting sideswiped by a stray dog and breaking his wrist and collarbone in the process was far from an ideal start to his international career. Getting back in the swing of things will be Jamie's focus in Chile and Argentina from there he'll concentrate on stepping up his pace as he settles into life as a Husaberg's factory rider in the Youth Cup class.

Wishing for three Manx world champions is a big ask. But it is possible. Whatever the outcome of the 2013 EWC season David Knight, Danny and Jamie McCanney are sure to have a big impact on the series. All the best guys.

Jonty



WALKER WIPED OUT!

JONNY'S SIT DOWN PROTEST EXPLAINED...

It's a glamorous life being a factory enduro rider. One minutes you're grinning like a Cheshire Cat in sunny Spain having your photos taken at a pre-season photo-shoot and the next you're feeling poorly and not wanting to play with your friends after a race in Italy!

Seriously though, hats off to Jonny W who having picked up a dose of the sh*t's while in Espagna battled his way to the end of Hell's Gate where he flaked out at the end of the race and was close to going to hospital. Eventually coming round Jonny joined winner Graham Jarvis and third placed Cody Webb on the podium.



A drained Jonny recovers

HELLRAISER!

GRIMBO'S THE HELL'S GATE HERO...

Husaberg's Graham Jarvis continued his domination of the international hard enduro scene by taking an impressive win at Hell's Gate in Italy. Repeating his result of 12 months ago, Jonny Walker (KTM) played bridesmaid to Jarvis by finishing second while Beta's Cody Webb became the first US rider to finish on the podium in the 10-year history of the event.

With heavy snow falling in the lead up to the race the Il Ciocco venue in Italy resembled a ski resort more than a hard enduro destination. With the morning's qualifying race whittling the initial start number of 120 competitors down to 30 it was Walker who won. However, with Jarvis and Webb in close pursuit it was clear the young Cumbrian would have a fierce fight on his hands if he wished to scale Hell's Peak as the winner.

With the four-lap main event starting at 3.30pm Walker grabbed the holeshot

and immediately set a strong pace. But as the first rider to hit open sections of the snow covered course the KTM rider crashed numerous times allowing Jarvis and Webb to slip past.

Once at the front of the field Jarvis quickly settled into the tricky conditions as he began to stretch an advantage over his rivals. Leading by over a minute at the end of lap one the Husaberg rider pushed on. Easily building his lead throughout the race he arrived to Hell's Peak with a 12-minute lead as darkness fell. Needing only a second attempt to scale the near vertical climb Jarvis crossed the finish line as the winner and claimed his third consecutive victory at the event.

"It's an incredible feeling to have won at Hell's Gate for the third time," confirmed Jarvis. "I was happy to follow Jonny from the start of the main race. I was riding behind him okay and in no hurry to pass but he made a mistake and I went to the front of the race."

"I had two goes at the final hill and

didn't even get anywhere near half way. I was screaming to the spectators to start pulling me because I've lost the race on the last hill before. It seemed to take forever to get to the top but once I got a rope on my bike I knew I was safe."

Recovering from his mistakes on lap one Walker fought his way past Webb on the penultimate lap to take second. Exhausted and fatigued due to previous illness Jonny was literally carried to the top of Hell's Peak to confirm his place as runner-up. Finishing five minutes behind Walker, Webb crossed the line in third.

Hampered by a starting position of 13th, Husaberg's Alfredo Gomez spent the majority of his race working through traffic to finish fourth. Although losing out to Gomez in the final stages of the race Beta's Ben Hemingway was the fifth and final rider to reach the top of Hell's Peak.

The hard enduro season resumes with the Erzbergrodeo on June 2.



14 NOT OUT!

DK TAKES ANOTHER BRITISH TITLE...

David Knight has already had reason to celebrate this year by wrapping up the short, two round British Extreme Enduro Championship. Delivering a dominant display of riding to win both rounds Knight secured his first championship with Honda and bumps his combined tally of national titles up to 14.

But with the World Enduro Championship taking up the majority of Knight's focus the Manxman – who recently became a father for the first time – has commented that he's unlikely to grow that number to 15 by the end of the season. Opting to contest only selected events that fit in his hectic schedule Knight won't be a permanent fixture on the national scene this season.

With a 2-3 scorecard KTM's Jonny Walker ended the series as runner-up. Bouncing back to take second place at round two after a disastrous opening round at Tong, Husaberg's Graham Jarvis salvaged third overall in the championship standings.



SUPERSONIC!

A SPEEDY TOUR AROUND THE INDOOR SCENE...

By the time you read this Britain might have a new SuperEnduro World Champion. With one round remaining (at the time of writing) Danny McCanney sits in prime position to claim the Enduro Junior SuperEnduro World Championship crown following a double win at round two in Barcelona.

Looking strong and riding well if Danny can deliver a performance at the series finale in Tours as impressive as he did in Barcelona he'll pick up his first FIM title. Finger crossed Danny boy!

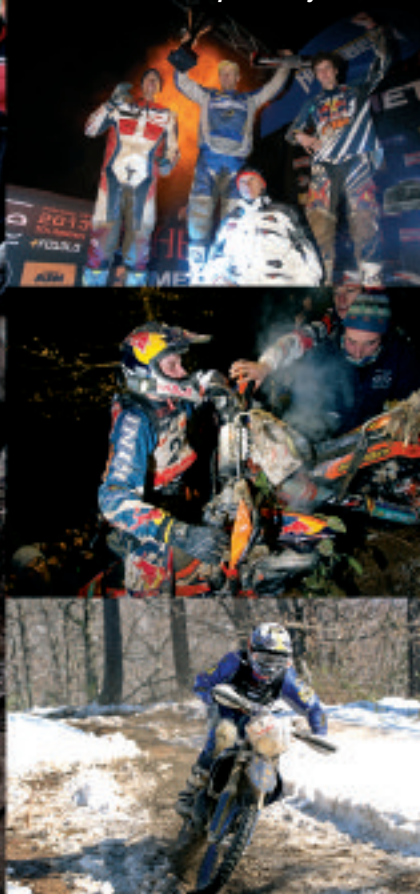
The three-round series concludes in France and Brits David Knight and Jonny Walker currently sit second and third behind reigning indoor champ Taddy Blazusiak. While the title is Taddy's to lose with just one-point separating David and Jonny both of the Brits have plenty to go for with both wanting the runner-up spot as well as wanting to end the series with an overall event win.

News is that an announcement about next winter's championship will be made at the final in Tours where it's rumoured that two events in South America will be unveiled. A five or six round series is expected but only time will tell how many riders will want to head to South America to race indoors. Stay tuned...



Even Jarvis needs a hand at times!

It's all smiles from the podium boys



BACK IN THE SADDLE!

JAMIE'S MCCANNEY'S RIDING ONCE MORE...

Following what could have been a spectacularly successful debut season in the Enduro World Championship – but frustratingly turned out to be an injury plagued year – Jamie McCanney is back on a bike following shoulder surgery and an official part of the Husaberg Factory team.

"It's going to be a tough year coming back from shoulder surgery and my other injuries in 2012 but being a part of the factory Husaberg team is

great. I've been working hard on my fitness while my shoulder's been healing and I pretty much know what to expect.

"It's my second year on a 125 and with Husaberg and I just want to do as well as I can at the start of the world championship. I'll give it my all but I know that because I've been off a bike for so long it'll take a little while to get back into things properly. I just want to stay healthy and get the results I know I'm capable of."





Millsaps remains solid as the series nears the halfway point



Dean Wilson's the 250SX East pace setter

REGIONAL RUCKUS!

FROM WEST TO EAST THE 250 CLASS KEEPS ON TRUCKIN'...

After taking control of the 250SX West series lead when early season pace setter Eli Tomac crashed out in Oakland, Red Bull KTM's Ken Roczen extends his lead this month as his 1-2 scorecard outscores Tomac's 3-1 by another two. K-Roc takes a commanding win at Anaheim 3 ahead of Martin Davalos as Tomac trails home third while it's Eli who wins in San Diego ahead of Kenny and Jason Anderson. With just three rounds left it's gonna take something

special for Tomac to claw back the 17 point deficit.

After San Diego the series heads to Dallas where the 250SX East series kicks off with a win for Dean Wilson. Deano dominates the main to take an early series lead ahead of Blake Wharton and Wil Hahn. It's Hahn who takes round two at Atlanta though as Wilson's feeling a little beat up after crashing midweek. The Scotsman still claims second though and leads the championship by two points.

SERIES STANDINGS

450SX

| | | |
|---|----------------|-----|
| 1 | Davi Millsaps | 174 |
| 2 | Ryan Villopoto | 152 |
| 3 | Ryan Dungey | 148 |
| 4 | Trey Canard | 135 |
| 5 | Chad Reed | 127 |

250SX WEST

| | | |
|---|-----------------|-----|
| 1 | Ken Roczen | 138 |
| 2 | Eli Tomac | 121 |
| 3 | Cole Seely | 95 |
| 4 | Jason Anderson | 88 |
| 5 | Kyle Cunningham | 83 |

250SX EAST

| | | |
|---|----------------|----|
| 1 | Dean Wilson | 47 |
| 2 | Wil Hahn | 45 |
| 3 | Blake Wharton | 40 |
| 4 | Marvin Musquin | 35 |
| 5 | Kyle Peters | 31 |

DAVI ROCKET!

MILLSAPS MARCHES ON TOWARDS THE AMA SUPERCROSS TITLE...

Just as things started settling down after the start of the season and everyone thought they had an idea of how things were going to go Ryan Dungey decided to get a wild hare up his ass at Anaheim 3 and lead every lap of the main on his way to victory. Unfortunately for him – as he attempts to chase down Davi Millsaps in the points chase – Millsaps was right on his tail throughout the race. Davi rode smart – almost cautious – and landed yet another podium finish to maintain his series lead while defending champ Ryan Villopoto had another case of the crashes and finished in a dismal eighth place. Justin Barcia finished third on the night in front of James Stewart and Chad Reed.

The series then headed to San Diego for the final round on the opening west-coast swing. Millsaps took off with the start but he had six-time San Diego winner Chad Reed all over him for half of the race before Reed went down in a turn. At that point Millsaps had a big lead and he held on to it to the finish beating Justin Barcia, Dungey and Stewart yet again. Then came Reed and defending champ Villopoto.

Ryan Villopoto got himself sorted out in Dallas. He lost his heat race to James Stewart after Stewart got a rare holeshot but Stewart's clutch broke on the line for the main event and he was unable to start. From there it was all Villopoto although points leader Millsaps was once again right on his tail minimising the loss of points to his title

rival. Dungey was third ahead of Reed, Brayton and Barcia.

When the series headed to Atlanta Villopoto had his hands full in his heat race trying to chase down James Stewart for the second straight week in a row. Stewart won the heat then grabbed his second holeshot of the night in the main event with Villopoto right on his tail. Villopoto kept Stewart honest for all 20 laps and they put a lot of time on the rest of the field but Villopoto could do nothing to get past. Stewart took his first win of the year over Villopoto but once again Millsaps finished right behind his title rival in third place and maintains a strong 22-point lead in the championship with the halfway point coming up in St. Louis next weekend. Exciting times ahead!



KYLE GAS!

CHISHOLM SIGNS FOR JGR

With Josh Grant hurting his ankle pretty badly at Anaheim 3 he's been struggling to put things together well enough to race on the weekends. After a few weeks of this the team struck a deal with Kyle Chisholm in the hopes that he can put a bike in the main events while Grant is gone. Chisholm hopes to stay with the team through the full season but that's not a guaranteed. Chisholm failed to make the main in Georgia but hopes to improve in St. Louis to keep his place alive.

SHORTSTOP!

IT'S BEEN A ROCKY ROAD BUT ANDREW SHORT'S FINALLY FOUND A HOME...

Andrew Short has been a bit of a ping-pong ball over the last few years going from Team Honda to Red Bull KTM then back to a Factory Honda in 2012 racing for the team started by Larry Brooks and Jeremy McGrath. After the L&M team folded a few rounds into the 2013 title chase – a couple of weeks after Larry Brooks publicly swore the team was doing just fine – Short had to buy his own Honda CRF450R and with almost no engine work and stock suspension modified by Enzo he hit the track for the next few weeks and had pretty decent results pitting (with no sponsor stickers) out of the Kranyak team rig. That hauler shut down operation after Dallas though when they got news that Short was going to be picked up by the Butler Bros. BTOSports.com KTM squad. So, now he's back at KTM but at least he has a steady bike and will know what to expect each weekend from here on out.



DEFLATED!

RYAN DUNGEY GETS A FLAT AT A3...

Ryan Dungey's year was already not going that well by Anaheim 3 and then while sitting on the start line ready to race his heat he realised his shock absorber wasn't rebounding. His super trick air shock on the back of his KTM had sprung a leak and gone flat. He rode off dejected then came back and for the second time this season got beat in the LCQ by Jimmy Albertson although he still transferred.

But in the main event Dungey put it all together grabbing a great start and leading every lap on his way to his only win in the series so far. Somehow, it took a flat shock and a trip to the LCQ to fire him up enough to take his first win of the year. He had a tough night in Atlanta but he's still third in points. It's going to take more than occasional podiums and very occasional wins to unseat super solid Davi Millsaps though.

TRADING UP!

TOMAC STEPS UP THE THE 450S

Eli Tomac will be joining the 450 ranks full time next year and as the 250SX West series takes a break has been riding the 450 class out East. In Atlanta Tomac qualified second overall with a 52.203 right behind James Stewart's 52.121 but he was hampered by poor starts during the races and could only manage seventh. He's a big guy though and a 450 seems to suit him. Look for him to do some damage in the coming weeks...



AMERICAN IDIOT

NO NEED!

COX CALLS OUT THE RACISTS WHO ARE BAGGING ON JAMES STEWART...

Words and photo by Steve Cox

I truly don't know how prevalent racial bigotry is in the UK. I know it exists but I've always assumed it's worse here in the USA but I could be wrong. Maybe it's because the USA is such a melting pot of cultures and races but whatever the reason some of the US fan base has always hated James Stewart.

It's easy to recognize when things turn from 'I don't like this racer because he crashes, or he rides too rough, or he wins too much' to 'I don't like that racer because he's black and he's beating the white racers that I like'.

I've personally witnessed blatantly racist remarks and behaviour toward James Stewart at the races. I haven't missed a race since 2004 and at Orlando in 2005 I was watching James Stewart sign autographs for fans in the Kawasaki pits while a couple of fans behind the line were yelling racial slurs at him.

What did Stewart do? He just smiled, engaged the fans he was signing for and ignored them. I asked him some time later if he heard them and he looked at me like I was stupid and said, "Yeah, of course."

I thought he must not have heard them because if I put myself in his shoes I'd have probably gotten up and knocked some ignorant jerks out. That was the first time I realised that even at about 20 years old James Stewart was more mature than I was – at least about that one thing. I was 28.

But it wore him down over the years. There's a reason his dancing from his 125cc days stopped – because people criticised him about it due to his race. Between not feeling like he was getting a fair shake from the fans and having to deal with some pretty weird situations in teams he raced for his public image has taken a hit. He has to do everything better, cleaner and nicer than everyone else in order to get an 'atta boy' from many fans.

Everything is just different about how James Stewart is perceived and he's the only guy who is treated that way. If he declines racing for Team USA at the Motocross des Nations people say he's not a patriot and is somehow undeserving of adulation. If he does race for Team USA the same people say he's only doing it to pander to the fans. When he signed a Supercross-only contract in 2009 people said he didn't care about the sport – only about money.

When Kevin Windham did the same thing the same people thought he 'deserved it' despite the fact that Stewart had won three outdoor titles (including a perfect 450cc season) to Windham's zero.

And it's happening now, too. It's true that he was blaming his crashing tendency (behind the scenes) on his Yamaha YZ450F although not explicitly so. He felt the YZ didn't suit his riding style and he wasn't getting settings to help him make it suit him. That's why he switched to Suzuki. Of course, he continued crashing on the Suzuki. But the core of the issue was still mainly the same – most of his crashes are due to he and his bike not getting along as well as he'd like. And then the rest? They're just crashes. Everyone crashes. It's not a phenomenon specific to James Stewart.

Still, after he tore his ACL in practice at Anaheim 1 my Facebook updates were frequently filled with people saying that he was being a sissy or using it as an excuse. Even after his clutch cable came out of his RM-Z450's case in Dallas people on my Facebook wall said that he should've at least tried to race without a clutch or that he was using the clutch as an excuse to quit. They even said that Stewart having his dad with him on the starting line – instead of his mechanic Lee McCollum – was a slap in the face of his team despite the fact that Stewart and his dad asked the team's permission ahead of time because he was struggling with his starts but his starts at home – with dad watching – were really good. With James Stewart, certain fans don't wait for an explanation before they issue a judgment and many times the explanation is just excused as an excuse regardless.

It's really unfortunate because in many ways Stewart has revolutionized the sport almost single-handedly. Every racer younger than him – and some older – scrub like he does now. The top racers in the world watch his lines on tape to see if they can pick up on what he's doing. He's 27 and this is his 13th season racing at the very top level of the sport.

People need to learn to show some respect. Unfortunately, because of their prejudice many people never will.





ADVENTURE SPEC!

**ALL-NEW OFF-ROAD OFFERING FROM
BRITISH BIKE BUILDERS CCM...**

When CCM ceased racing at the end of 2011 it was thought that the Bolton brand might disappear from sporting circles all together and concentrate more on their military spec machines but like a phoenix from the flames they're back once more although this time they're headed off in a slightly different direction – to the Dakar.

By utilising everything they learnt from their factory racing programme – plus over 40 years of bike building experience – CCM have created the GP450 Adventure Bike. Designed to be a top quality adventure sport bike – at an entry level price – the GP450 will be one of the few bikes of its genre to be highly capable both on and off-road,

mostly thanks to its innovative design that ensures it's as light as can be while still pumping out a potent 46 BHP.

"The GP450 Adventure represents four years of hard work and investment that we put into our racing programme," says Austin Clews. "Everything we learnt from CCM Racing has gone into the new bike and we're relying on the commercial success of this new model to provide a solid platform from which we can launch a whole new range of motorcycles. We're very excited about the GP450 Adventure bike and we are gearing the Bolton factory up now to begin production in May. Initially we'll produce just 20 units per month before increasing that to around 40 by mid summer."



Breville Nadshaw's ready for some Masters action

REMASTERED!

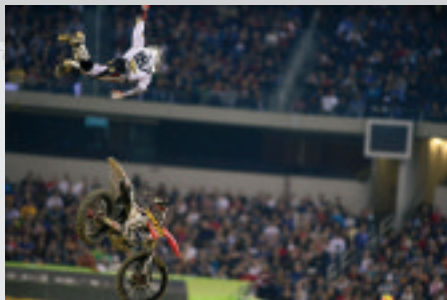
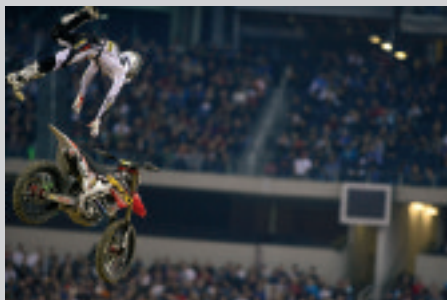
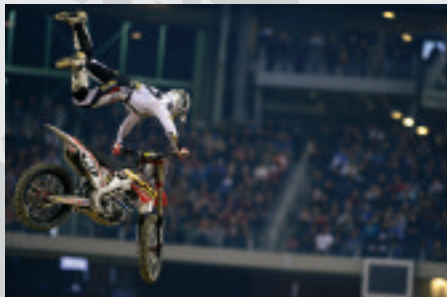
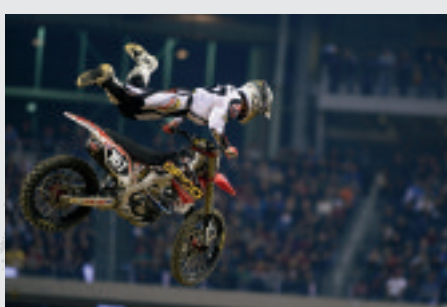
**YET ANOTHER DATE SWITCH AROUND
FOR THE WULFSPORT BRITISH MASTERS...**

With all the rescheduled dates flying about these days it seems kinda pointless releasing details of your race series at all. For the umpteenth time this year the Wulfsport British Masters

crew have had a shuffle of when and where their thing is going off and there's also been a venue change. Here's the latest – and hopefully last – list of what's happening when and where...

March 9/10
April 27/28
May 24/25
June 15/16
July 27/28
August 17/18
September 7/8

Preston Docks, Lancashire
Foxhill, Wiltshire
Whitby, Yorkshire
Hawkstone Park, Shropshire
FatCat Motoparc, Yorkshire
Brookthorpe, Gloucestershire
Pontrilas, Herefordshire



SURVIVOR!

ZACH BELL SURVIVES THE BIGGEST CRASH OF THE YEAR SO FAR...

GEICO Honda's Zach Bell had one of the most spectacular crashes in supercross history at Dallas in what was his first ever professional supercross race. While leading his heat he scrubbed a triple a little too hard and his foot hit the face of the jump which ripped him off of his bike. He fell almost three stories to the very hard Dallas dirt.

According to those on scene he was actually conscious when they got to him although in a lot of pain and unable to breathe because he got the wind knocked out of him. The most remarkable part is that he was conscious and it was some of the best advertising that the new 6D helmets could've got.

Bell showed up at Atlanta with a couple of black eyes but with some speed. He nearly won his heat race and ran near the front in the main too before he went down again. He's still figuring supercross out but when he's on two wheels he's fun to watch.



DANGEROUS

SNOW ANGEL!

OUR ANGELIC AMCA LEGEND JUST LOVES PLAYING IN THE WHITE STUFF...

Words by **Lee Dunham** Photo by **Sutty**

After a few weeks back on the bike in the UK I've come to the conclusion that our country is twinned with Antarctica. I think we've had more snow than most of the European ski resorts and every time you think its getting better someone from your friends list on Facebook posts a sunny Spanish or American photo of their training abroad just to rub it in that little bit more. Then all of a sudden out of the blue it starts to snow again.

We went to FatCat Motoparc recently after leaving Gloucestershire where the sun was shining. We'd ridden for most of the morning and the track was in perfect shape. During the lunch break while we were sitting there eating spaghetti bolognese from the night before out of my mum's Tupperware the heavens opened with snow. The track was white over in minutes. So we left as it was crazy, got back as far as Birmingham and the weather was sunny again.

Last week Brightside, Ben, Couttsy and I rode at DMP. We got there and expected it to be wet but it was in great shape and perfect to bust a few motos out. So we changed a few bike set up bits and altered the fuelling and now each lap's a smile. Brightside aka Bubba was putting on a display of signature bum whips!

After the day of training Gert Krestinov rang me and I hooked up with him back at his yard and we did a short cool down jog before Ed Bradley turned up and we went over to his for a bite to eat with Ed's wife and Gert's girlfriend which was awesome.

Kate B then turned up with stick-on moustaches! The sensible adults that we all are then stuck them on and much to everyone's delight we couldn't stop laughing! It was a great night! The next morning Gert, Ed and I went swimming at the local pool. I say local but it's about three and a half hours from my house but luckily Ed put me up for the night which was ace!

After training though it was back to work and over to Huddersfield Mercedes to check out a car for a customer. Then back down to Worcester to another car garage and then home! An all round trip that took the whole day of driving – mostly sat in traffic. Why is it when sat in traffic you always get the weirdos to your left or right in the queue?

I raced at Bromsberrow which was the first race the AMCA had in the 2013 calendar. It was a good but ridiculously cold day and although it wanted to snow for most of the day it held off. I double entered the MX2 and MX1 Experts which was tough as I'd not raced a race in five months but I felt pretty comfortable and it was good having KB Racing there to sort my bike and suspension out throughout the day.

The track was really very fast and a very short lap at just over a minute so the bumps were sharp and square edged. It didn't really get that rutty in the corners – it just had gnarly bumps everywhere that were really kicky and awkward to deal with. It was a good first meeting back racing and like everyone says 'there's no better practice than when you're actually behind that gate!'

Anyways I'm back in the sand now trying to get a bit fitter and faster ready for the IMBA first round which they're holding at Dunkerque in France. I'm pretty excited about this race although it's 100 per cent going to be tough. I really feel it's going to be an awesome round! Hopefully by the time I come to writing next months issue there will be some good news result wise!

Sharkey and I have been training in the sand recently and we took Parme with us. Paul needed some panels tightening on his bike so Parme came to the rescue with a bit of wood and a sledge hammer. That resulted in a radiator bolt being rammed and wouldn't go into place or out either. It was a funny journey home that's for sure.

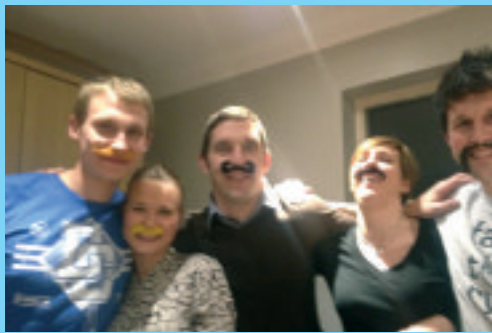
CTI popped down the other day too and brought me a new set of customs. If anyone needs knee braces then give these guys a call – they're the best!

Other than racing I've turned into a bit of an eBayoholic! I'm not buying, just selling everything. I love the buzz of haggling and receiving cash pretty and at times it's pretty much like being on the programme Cash in the Attic. I'm trying to save up and I've had to sell all the odds and sods around the house instead of selling the jet ski! It's pretty amazing what people buy!

Lee Dunham
#281

PHOTO OF THE MONTH!

What happens when DBR test pilot Ed Bradley hooks up with Gert Krestinov and Lee Dunham should probably stay behind closed doors – 'tachtastic dudes!



MEMBER OF THE MONTH

With one of the best profile pictures on **dirtZone** Emma Potter stands out from the social crowd before you even look at her dirtZone page. Lots of interaction with other dirtZoners and with DBR means she is raking in the Loyalty Points. 30-year-old Emma may not be an all-out dirt nut but she sure is nuts about dirtZone and that's cool by us.

VIDEO OF THE MONTH!

There's only one movie worth watching this month and it ain't Wreck-It Ralph, apparently. Nope, the viral with the most vigour is the DC TeamWorks Robbie Maddison Air.Craft video that went live on February 11 and set pulses racing and hits flying through the roof! It's an awesome watch to be sure so go check it out if you haven't



SWEET TWEETS



@Andre_Villa

Pick up Dirt Bike Rider for a six page interview with me. Cheers @dbrmagazine



17 likes

JL101 Loved the @mmlinkogle article in Dirtbike rider mag, can relate to the guys ways so much #mx #motocross #dirtbike #dirtbikerider #magazine #article #badass mmlinkogle @jl101 where do I find that bad boy???

@JL101

@dbrmagazine the man @MMLinkogle wants a copy of this month's DBR

@ChrisBirchFMX

Nice write up about the Arenacross and a little shot of me from the O2 in this month's @dbrmagazine cheers

@Ebanksbrowne

It's GP time. Just sitting on the plane now waiting to fly to Qatar :) The bullsh*t stops this weekend.

@JimmyAlbertson

Entering Georgia and boy it's wet!

@JHerlings84

Sorry for the late update. Made my way to Qatar. Knee pretty badly damaged and my leg is really badly bruised. Definately won't fight for the win. Top five in MX2 is my goal – if I can make it to the gate anyway. Two more days to heal up – will be in big pain.

@DBRacingUK

Motocross season starts soon. Can't wait to get racing. See you all at FatCat.

RADIO GA GA

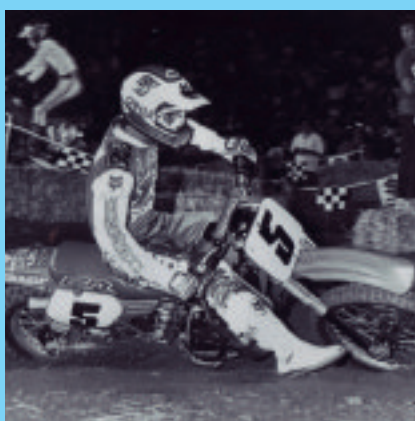
Every Wednesday night from eight until 10 it's the Off-Road Show with Chris Warren Jnr on the UK's only online radio station worth listening to – check it out at www.bikerfm.co.uk.



INSTAGRAM JAM



Nitro Circus 3D film screening tickets up for grabs at #london #O2



Let's get #throwbackthursday going with some #supercross from #seattle – the legendary Ricky Johnson @therickyjohnson

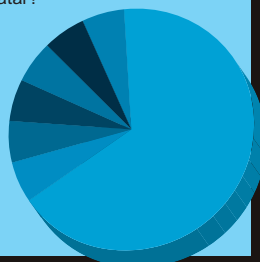


Chris Meyer gets wild at #arenacross #freestyle – looking forward to more action in Liverpool on Sunday #fmx #bigair #jump #fox #monsterenergy

POLL OF THE MONTH!

Who will win the MX1/MX2 combined moto in Qatar?

- Antonio Cairoli
- Tommy Searle
- Jeffrey Herlings
- Steven Frossard
- Kevin Strijbos
- Max Anstie



If your **dirtZone** post appears on this page you'll win a one-litre bottle of marvellous Muc-Off bike cleaner* – unless you live outside Britain in which case we'll send you some of Muc-Off's brilliant brushes and wipes instead...
*One bottle per member per month



GAUTIER PAULIN



TANEL LEOK



CEDRIC SOUBEYRAS



MAXIME DESPREY



VALENTIN TEILLET



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There are scrubs and then there are dirty scrubs but these scrubs from the Valence International are the dirtiest scrubs around. But which one's best? You decide! Simply follow this link www.bit.ly/dbr-scrubs-april, log in to dirtZone and vote for your favourite scrub. Everyone who casts a vote before April 5 will then be entered into a free draw to win a Rip N Roll Hybrid racer pack. Simple.

WIN!

ACERBIS X-STRONG KNEE GUARD

Not everyone gets on with knee braces and for those who don't – but still want to protect their knee and lower legs from impact injury – the Acerbis X-Strong knee guard could just be about perfect. Slip a pair of these on and your knee cap, tibia and even the lower part of your femur will be covered by a sandwich of thermoplastic materials and padding. This knee guard is doubly articulated and that ensures maximum movement with a great torsional stiffness.

Price: £99.99
Supplier: acerbis.it
Contact: 01582 491076



ACERBIS X-MOVE BOOT

Designed by riders for riders these X-Move boots from Acerbis are strong, flexible (thanks to their hinged design) and very reasonably priced n'all. Available in white or black and pretty much all adult sizes you can check out a pair at your closest dirt bike emporium right now!

Price: £164.95
Supplier: acerbis.it
Contact: 01582 491076

EVS T5 GP HELMET

The EVS T5 GP skid lid fully complies with all ECE safety standards, is lightweight and well vented but the best part about the whole deal is the price. Basically at around 75 bones it's a great helmet for a great price so go check it out at your local dealer right now...

Price: £74.99
Supplier: racefx.co.uk
Contact: 0845 450 1448

APICO LAUNCH CONTROL HOLESHOT DEVICE

If you need a hand yanking the holey, a devilish device like this Apico Launch Control could just be what you need to get you going. These CNC machined bad boys are available for all makes of modern motocross bikes in factory associated anodised colours and are used by top stars like Brad Anderson and Gert Krestinov. The latest version even comes with a hinge to make fitment easy as pie. Mmmm pie.

Price: £30
Supplier: apico.co.uk
Contact: 01282 473190



MULE BAR SPORTS NUTRITION

Mule Bars are an absolute revolution in sports nutrition. Not because of the awesome blend of all natural ingredients but because it actually tastes like something that you would want to eat rather than the gag inducing, denture destroying cardboard cack you would normally find in the 'natural nutrition' aisle. They sponsor a few top lads here – Bryan MacSnazzy being one of them. His favourite flavours are Apple Strudel and Summer Pudding and he reckons that they're 'tastier than an authentic Scottish square sausage.' That'll be bloody yummy then!

Price: £1.50
Supplier: madison.co.uk
Contact: 0870 034 7226

MAXIMA BIO WASH

If you want a nice clean bike without running the risk of ruining the environment then check out Maxima's Bio Wash. It's said to lift dirt and protect the earth which makes it a winner in our books...

Price: £4.99 per litre
Supplier: racefx.co.uk
Contact: 0845 450 1448



DRC UNIVERSAL FORK SEAL DRIVER

The DRC universal fork seal driver is the perfect tool for anyone who has to service suspension on more than one model of bike. The interchangeable insert system makes it possible to drive in seals on every modern fork around on all bikes from 65 to 450cc which is pretty handy, huh?

Price: £69.99
Supplier: madison.co.uk
Contact: 0870 034 7226



DEFT FAMILY MX GLOVES

If you want the coolest and lightest motocross gloves on this planet then you need to hook yo' sen up with some of these Deft Family doozies that are available right now in the UK through the MBO Sport dealer network.

Price: £27.99

Supplier: mbosport.com

Contact: 0208 660 0054



POLISPORT MX ROCKS HAND PROTECTOR

When Polisport decided they wanted to make the best handguards known to man they went to a team that's renowned for its outstanding race and development programme – Rockstar Energy Suzuki. And what the Geboers camp came up with was these MX Rocks guards that are protective while remaining sleek and well vented. If you wanna protect your pinkies you could do much, much worse...

Price: £23.99

Supplier: apico.co.uk

Contact: 01282 473190

OPTIC ORIGINAL BOBBLE HAT

Optic's first (and so far best) bobble hat is just about the best thing you could ever put on your head – or that's what Optic's marketing department claim. And who are we to argue as The Bear's been hiding his increasingly large mullet with one for the past twelve weeks or so. So if you wanna be cool like The Bear slip your skull in an Optic Original bobble hat too – the girls will love it (even if you're a girl!)

Price: £17

Supplier: optictld.com

Contact: sam@optictld.com



RFX PRO CRF450R REAR SPROCKET CONVERSION SPACER

If you bought a new CRF450R expecting your old wheels to fit then you probably got a bit of a shock when you found the sprockets were a million miles out of line – actually less than 4mm – causing the chain to sit skew-whiff. The good news is there's no need to chuck away those old Talon, Haan, Hollis, SM Pro or OEM wheels because Race FX have got your back with this adapter plate that lines things back up. Machined in the UK from the highest grade aluminium around these plates simply fit between your sprocket and hub so everything is tickety-boo once more.

Price: £44.99

Supplier: racefx.co.uk

Contact: 0845 450 1448

TWIN AIR FUEL FILTER

If there's one thing that modern fuel injected dirt bikes dislike then it's dirty fuel as the pesky particles have a nasty habit of blocking up fuel pumps and injectors. Luckily the smart guys at Twin Air – who know a thing or two about the importance of cleanliness – have got you covered with their ingenious and oh-so easy to install fuel filter that more or less guarantees that you'll never put dirt in your fuel tank ever again. Simply pop it in through your filler and sit back safe in the knowledge you've gone a long way towards ensuring ingested dirt won't ruin your dirt biking days again.

Price: £24.99

Supplier: apico.co.uk

Contact: 01282 473190





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TIME TO SHINE!

ENTERING THE MX1 CLASS WITHOUT A MAJOR TITLE TO HIS NAME TOMMY SEARLE KNOWS HE HAS TO MAKE IT HAPPEN ON A 450 IF HE'S GOING TO LIVE THE DREAM OF BEING A WORLD CHAMPION...

Words by Adam Wheeler Photos by Ray Archer

An interview with Tommy Searle ahead of a new racing campaign doesn't bring the promise of a particularly interesting read but it's not the 23 year old's fault – we already know who Searle is, what he's done and what he possibly could do. The big question is to what extent does he? And is it time we started getting excited?

Any media work that Searle does at this time of year is bound to focus on his personal assessment of his chances in MX1. As our best hope – and arguably the brightest talent this island has churned out in the last 10 years – Searle's name, story and personality are familiar to many and he now occupies a forceful place in any GP bench racing conversation as he stands on the brink of a first MX1 championship assault.

There are many riders who have excelled on the 450 in a class-switch and not many who

have felt the need to regress so the odds are in favour of the 2012 MX2 runner-up making a decent impression. Judging against the efforts of the likes of Steven Frossard, Gautier Paulin, David Philippaerts, Evgeny Bobryshev and even Tony Cairoli in their initial attempts at MX1 Searle should make a splash especially considering that he's already beaten all of the riders mentioned in this very sentence at some time or another.

Tommy has become an easier interviewee over time. Easy to smile and quick to drop in sarcasm or crumbs of his dry humour, he's a straight and engaging talker once you get him going. But is he ready to dish-up some strong statements about where he will be in MX1? Is he confident enough to throw a gauntlet down for the title or will he hope to exceed expectations by dumbing down any hype?

Let's find out...

>>





DBR: Okay Tommy, 2013 – what do you honestly think? Especially since with the cancellation of the Hawkstone Park International you won't have seen or ridden against any of your new rivals until Qatar...

TS: "I honestly think that I will be right there and I do not have any doubt in my head about that. I feel like I am a good enough rider – certainly as good as anyone in that class so there is no reason why I won't be right there."

DBR: Isn't there a bit of mystery involved though what with being on the 450 now and discovering a new speed and set of limits?

TS: "Not really. Okay, I'm on a new bike but it is the same really. I ride it a bit differently but I ride a 450 well and you can talk to anyone who has seen me on it and they'll say the same thing."

"I think there is the danger that you can struggle in your second year in MX1. The first season seems to be a bit of a surprise and if you look at people like Frossard, Bobryshev and Paulin then they went up and did alright. So I should be okay. I don't have too much expectation and I don't think anyone is saying that I'll move up and spank everyone. There isn't any special pressure on my shoulders. I feel like I've had a good winter and now it is time to go and see what we can do."

DBR: When Paulin won early on last year Christophe Pourcel said he was riding well but had to calm down a bit and learn more about racing MX1. It turns out he was right so are you also looking at how to plan it out?

TS: "Yeah, I've thought about that and I've taken my time. I didn't ride until January and took the whole winter off the bike whereas a lot of people got a bit carried away and in Holland were just pounding out motos in November and December. I have a good programme and people around me and I rely on them to help keep my feet on the ground and get through the season."

DBR: Speaking about those people I imagine your trainer Kirk Gibbons had some different things for you compared to previous years. Was it what you expected or a bit harder?

TS: "It was alright actually. Most was similar to what we had done before but there were a few things that were a bit different – nothing too dramatic. I felt good on the bike pretty much right away. When I got to America to start riding I did find that I had a few bad days to go with the good ones on the 450 but every day was solid. I ironed out the bad days in the end. It was a bit more difficult to set up the 450 than I imagined – especially with the air forks – but we stuck to it and now I feel like I have a good bike where I can go out and practice wherever and whenever. The training I did with Kirk and Jamie has done the job."





DBR: How do you find those air forks? Some people love them instantly and others take a bit longer to get used to them...

TS: "I think they are better and all the suspension guys say that this is the material that they want to work with. I haven't heard anyone who works or knows a lot about suspension saying 'this isn't the way to go'. Bones [revered Pro Circuit technician] believes that you can do a lot more with them. It is just early days and people need to learn about them."

DBR: You mentioned having a few bad days in the USA. Were you feeling slow or not getting a rhythm together?

TS: "In America some of the tracks were a bit different – a lot smoother – and we were also

trying to test as well as start riding again. It felt like everything was happening later but that was only because the season is starting sooner so I was worrying a bit about the time ticking away. I was thinking 'there's only eight weeks to go here'. There were no big issues but I needed to calm down a little bit and reassess working on this and that. But the team were there and we did it."

DBR: You spent a month in California. For you personally what's the value of being able to head over there?

TS: "I like it in California because I like the lifestyle and I also have my house and some friends there. It is also a base for me. I'm not the sort of person who likes to travel to the





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THE MANAGER'S VIEW...

A QUICK WORD WITH JAMIE DOBB

"I don't want to put any undue pressure on the kid but I think it's looking pretty good. There are no illusions of grandeur but it would not be unrealistic to think of a top three championship position at the end of the year. I really rate Tommy as a rider and I think he has proved that he knows how to push for a championship, both before he went to America and then over the past two seasons since he'd been back. It won't be easy but the way he rides a motorcycle... I think he has some great years and success ahead of him."



middle-of-nowhere, find a sh*t hotel then ride, eat, sleep, ride, eat and sleep and so on. I like having a life aside from that. Being in California is good but while I am there I am knuckling down and working hard."

DBR: Being there while the Supercross season was starting did it make you think that the AMA series is still something you need to tackle?

TS: "Not really. I am happy where I am and I'm having fun and that's important to me. I feel that I have a good fan base here and I'm excited to go to the races. I'm already looking forward to the British Grand Prix and I can't get that kind of feeling in America."

DBR: Were you at Pro Circuit much and speaking with Mitch Payton? Are Pro Circuit still serious about GP racing?

TS: "Yeah, I was there a lot. I would see Mitch a couple of times a week and then was testing with Bones. We'd have motors and pipes from Mitch to test and we ended up working on stuff

that you'd normally not think about. It was really nice to get their view on everything. It was spot on and I get on well with both of them. That's another nice part of going out there. I think Mitch wants the best for me and obviously he likes to see his bikes win and do well – as anyone would – he doesn't want to half-arse anything."

DBR: Coming back to MX1 are you aware of your status coming into the class and do you think there is more relevance to doing well in the so called premier category? Tony Cairoli once commented that in Italy MX2 meant relatively little compared to MX1...

TS: "No, I don't think there is much difference. I went 1-1 in the 250 class at the British GP and if I did the same in MX1 I don't think I'd feel any happier. It's the same. If I'm winning then I'm gonna be happy. Obviously MX1 is going to be harder because there are a lot of factory teams, good guys and a lot of talent but MX2 has always been important to me."



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THE TRAINER'S VIEW...

CATCHING UP WITH KIRK GIBBONS

"We are not going there to make the numbers up and I think Tommy will do us proud. He is loving the 450 right now and has trained his ass off physically and mentally. The last time we raced against Cairoli we gave him a battle and I think Tommy can be there every week and not just put up one or two decent races like Desalle or Pourcel. He is flying – you just watch!"



DBR: Cairoli is the reference point for MX1. You've seen him up close after two years back in GPs but are you analysing him a bit more now to see what you need to do and how you can measure yourself?

TS: "Yeah. I might start watching a few more DVDs actually. He normally gets good starts and I think in MX1 the starts are so important. I don't know how he does it but he takes a lot of holeshots and that makes life easier for him. He is also one of the few guys who can make a 10th placed start and end up winning the race. There are not many who can do that unless they are around the first corner in the top three or four and Cairoli is the exception. The big difference though is that his bad races are a lot better than anyone else's bad races."

DBR: What are your honest thoughts about going somewhere like Qatar to start the season?

TS: "I'm excited about it. I mean it is a bit different for the teams compared to the riders

where most of us can find a good hotel, get off the plane and go and ride in good conditions. For me, I think it will also be a bit like a holiday as much as a race!"

DBR: Can you understand the view of some that it's not really 'motocross' to be out there?

TS: "Sometimes it is good to do something different. For the first race especially, for us, it can be good to be overseas because a European GP would be crazy with many people wanting to be there, wanting passes and it seems like the start gate is full of five hundred people all wanting to be with the riders."

"In Qatar the people that need to be there will be travelling, we'll get the job done and then come back. For the fans it is not as good and it's difficult to get there. That sucks a bit. There might be some people at Qatar but it won't be like having true fans. It's always nice to have those Brits that come and watch everywhere. The whole idea of going there – for a rider – is

not a big deal we just jump on the plane, turn up at the track, have a walk of it and then go race."

DBR: It will be the longest Grand Prix season in the modern era – it's gonna be important to get to the end isn't it?

TS: "Really important. We haven't even started yet and a few of the guys have already got little injuries. It is vital to try and stay healthy. You only need to tuck a front wheel in a turn and something breaks. You always need a bit of luck on your side and you cannot get too over confident or on the other hand get too down. If you have a couple of bad races then you can't start wallowing. I'm pretty strong but I'm not planning on setting the world alight at the first race. It's a long season and I just want to be solid and have as many good races as I can. I want to be fighting at the front every week but there will be 15 MX1 riders saying the same thing and there is only space on the podium for three. I will try hard to be there all year long."



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Q: As a former world champion and GP rider do you feel that there is a certain amount of expectation for you to deliver a title this season and that anything less would be seen as a huge disappointment?

Adrian Bowles, Norwich

A: "No. I'm racing because I love racing motorcycles. Of course I want to win and that is what I aim and work for but I don't feel an expectation – we will see."

Q: Will both you and Nico Aubin be riding in the MX1 class or will your team be going for a MX1/MX2 double header?

Darren Marshall, Cleethorpes

A: "As far as I know we will be both riding the MX1 class."

Q: It's really exciting that you will be riding in both the British Championships and Red Bull Pro Nationals, would you say that the UK has the strongest domestic championships in Europe?

Cian Lacey, Altrincham

A: "It has a strong championship for sure and that is what got my interest. I have raced GPs for many years and that challenge for me is over. When Dave approached me about the British races I was excited because it's something new something different – a whole new challenge."

STEVE RAMON

THIS MONTH IT'S DOUBLE WORLD CHAMP STEVE RAMON WHO'S STARING INTO THE SPOTLIGHT...

INTERVIEWS BY JP O'CONNELL PHOTO BY RAY ARCHER

Q: With two world championships to your name did you not consider retiring after your huge crash at Lommel?

Brad Mott, Newbury

A: "At first I didn't think I would ride again or even if I could do much again. Your brain wants to do something but the body just doesn't respond. So yes I thought it was over. After some time I started to recover and at that point I started to think about riding just because I love riding – it's what I do."

Q: Having ridden full factory bikes for the past few years how does your new Buildbase Honda feel and what are the biggest differences between that and your Suzuki?

Mitch Bennett, Sutton Coldfield

A: "Well it's hard to say at the moment. I rode Suzuki and the same team for years so I knew exactly what I had and they new exactly what I liked. The Honda feels like a nice bike but we still have lots to try and to get set up."

Q: Does it bother you that you won the '07 championship without taking a GP win or do you see it as simply a case of whoever has the most points at the season end takes it?

Jeff Dickinson, King's Lynn

A: "So many people have asked about my '07 title and does it feel like it should. My answer is it feels great! Motocross is a super tough sport and yes speed and winning is the goal of course but many of the riders start the year capable of winning races. The riders that stay physically fit, mentally fit and manage to stay in one piece and finish every race are the guys that win championships. I have also had years where

I am the guy that gets hurt and misses out on the championship or the race. In 2008 I missed the world title and finished second by 14 points – it's just how it goes."

Q: Will you be basing yourself in the UK for the season or will you be training and practicing at home then traveling here for each round?

John Lumsden, Gateshead

A: "No I will stay at home in Belgium. I have my practice bikes at home and I am just really set up in Belgium with my training, tracks, doctors, physio etc so I will just travel to each race."

Q: Of your two world titles which was the most special to you and why?

Larry Bacon, Kirkcaldy

A: "I think with any sport the first world title is the one because that is what we all try to achieve – although they both feel pretty good."

Q: Of all the bikes you've raced which one was your personal favourite and what was so good about it?

Leon Sharple, Dorchester

A: "All the bikes I had the last 12 years were good. Let's say my 2003 125 KTM. I like the sound of a two-stroke."

Q: If you were able to take a title this season would you be looking to make a move back into GPs or have you decided to leave them for good?

Ian Pike, Trent

A: "No I am not looking at GPs any more. Like I said earlier I race because I want to race and enjoy it."

Q: As a Belgian it goes without saying that you would be good in the sand but it seems that you are equally as good on the hardpack. If you had a choice which would you prefer to race on?

Dave Green, Reading

Q: "Yes I like all conditions so I really don't mind. I enjoy technical tracks and it doesn't matter to me if it's sand or hard. I am usually better as the track gets harder to ride."

Q: You have been wearing a neck brace for quite a while now did it help when you crashed in the deep sand of Lommel?

Will King, Somerton

A: "Yes for sure. I have had two major crashes where I feel the Leatt brace really saved me from further injury. A few years ago in Valkenswaard I crashed in the first moto and I didn't realize at the time but I fractured my neck in the fall. I raced the second moto and finished seventh but the next day I was still in a lot of pain and when they x-rayed they saw it was fractured. On this occasion the Leatt brace stopped some of the impact and also helped to keep the neck from displacing which of course would be very bad."

"Then my fall in Lommel was very heavy and the impact was straight onto my head. On this occasion I had nerve damage because of the amount of impact that I had. My shoulders both pushed down so far that it over stretched the nerves that lead to my neck and head. Also on this occasion there was no displacement – the Leatt brace moved the impact from my neck and head onto my shoulders. My surgeon said it would have been a lot worse without the brace."

REDNED!

BACK WITH KTM FOLLOWING TWO MEDIOCRE SEASONS
WITH GAS GAS SPAIN'S IVAN CERVANTES IS GUNNING
FOR A RETURN TO FORMER GLORY...

Words and photos by Future 7 Media





If Ivan Cervantes knew in 2010 what he knows today chances are he'd never have brought his nine-year relationship with KTM to a close. Longing for greener grass after successive Enduro 2 class defeats to the late Mika Ahola, Ivan hoped Gas Gas would give him all that he needed to return to the very top.

Fast forward to 2013 and Ivan is back on orange. He remains a four-time EWC champion – the exact same number of titles he had before signing for Gas Gas – and by his own admission achieved little of real significance during the past two seasons.

Wanting to re-establish himself at the top of the EWC Ivan will go up against the likes of Pela Renet, Johnny Aubert, David Knight and others this year in his bid to secure a first Enduro title. Armed with KTM's 350cc four-stroke Ivan also hopes to hand the Austrian manufacturer their first ever 350cc powered EWC title.

"Returning to KTM is something I am very, very happy about. KTM is the manufacturer I was with for nine years before leaving to go to Gas Gas so it feels like I'm coming home.

"My relationship with KTM didn't end so well in 2010 when I told them I was leaving

for another team. When I first told the team it would be my last year, that I was considering going to another team, they didn't believe me. Maybe they thought I was just trying to get more money, trying to increase my price but I was serious.

"I explained that I wasn't joking. After nine years with KTM I wanted to try something different. I was also offered very good money to leave. When I signed the Gas Gas contract I sent a message to Fabio [Farioli] the KTM enduro team manager telling him I was leaving. The weekend after was the GP of Turkey which was an interesting time.



"That was a tough time for KTM too because before that David Knight, Juha Salminen and Marko Tarkkala had gone to BMW. Things weren't great between the team and myself when they knew I was leaving but I think that's normal.

"I think all riders reach a point in their career when they start to think about how life would be somewhere else, with another team. I think it's a natural thing to change teams. In 2010 I had a very big fight with Mika Ahola. I finished second again in the E2 championship and started thinking that I needed more – something extra that would allow me to win.

"I knew that with KTM I had everything I needed to well. I had a great bike, support, mechanic and if anything needed to be changed it would be done quickly. But I was also thinking about the future – what I would be doing after my racing finishes. That's when I decided to go to Gas Gas to see if there was something they could give me to help me get back to the top.

"After half a year I spoke with my father and admitted to him that I hadn't made a good decision in leaving KTM. He already knew but that's life. People say that you don't know what you've lost until you lose it. And I realised that things with Gas Gas weren't going to be exactly as I expected them to be.

"I knew I would have to work hard at Gas Gas and that was a part of the new challenge. I was happy with that. I hoped to be able to develop a new big bike for them in the future and that together we'd achieve success but I realised after six months exactly what road they wanted to travel down.

"I tried with the two-stroke in 2011. In many races I stayed in a high level but I wasn't able to challenge for the victory. I finished third in the Enduro 2 championship but Johnny Aubert made many mistakes, Renet stopped a few times and other riders had problems. That's why I got third. It looked like an okay season but I knew that there was a lot of work to do if I was going to challenge for a title.

"In my contract it said that there would be a new four-stroke for me to race. We would develop it during 2011 and race it in 2012 but that didn't happen. Yamaha closed their Spanish factory at this time and had 200 WR450 engines there. They were 2007 model engines and Gas Gas brought them. The Catalan Government has money in Gas Gas and organised the sale of the engines at a good price. That was the end of the new four-stroke.

"2012 started in a difficult way for Gas Gas. They had designed their new bikes with paper air filters which was a mistake. I had already said to them when I tested the bike the summer before that the system wasn't good. They didn't listen to me. The problem was that the engineers didn't want to accept that they'd made a mistake and wasted money. So it was my voice against the engineers.

"It looked like I made a good start to the 2012 Enduro 2 world championship I was leading the class after the GPs in Chile and Argentina. And this was a big problem. I was leading the championship but because other riders had problems. Juha had a DNF, Renet was up and down, Aubert was tired from the Dakar, Guerrero also had some small problems. I won because I didn't have so many problems and I won one day. But because I won testing and development stopped.

"I pushed so hard at the start of 2012 but at the third round in Spain I made some mistakes and then had a technical problem in Portugal. At that same time my motivation was starting to go down. I wanted to win but my motivation to win wasn't enough. For one year I'd been having problems with my training bikes and slowly that started to make things harder for me. I felt like I was pushing alone at times. >>



A solid start to the season saw development work on the Gasser grind to a halt





Cervantes rates Cristobal Guerrero quite highly

NEXT BIG THINGS!

SPAIN'S UP-AND-COMING...

"When I turn my head to see which of the young Spanish riders is moving forward, able to join me as a Spanish Enduro World Champion I see that we have a problem in Spain. There is Cristobal Guerrero and his brother Victor, Oriol Mena, Lorenzo Santolino and Mario Roman but after this there is no obvious signs of our next champions.

"When you look at France it's incredible. The level of competition in the French championship is incredibly high and more and more riders are coming to enduro there. Good young riders that are able to make a career for themselves. It is necessary in Spain to do something.

"I don't know what the solution is. Guerrero has twice been an EWC runner-up in E2 which shows how well he is riding. But we need more riders coming into enduro in Spain. In this moment it is hard because of the economy in Spain. I don't know who will be the next Spanish world champion in enduro."

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"A lot of people misunderstood my decision to return to KTM. I was very fortunate to have many proposals from inside the EWC paddock but I felt KTM was the best place for me. My results weren't very good the last two years but people could see that with a good bike I would be able to fight for the podium.

"I have to thank all of the teams that showed interest in me. Husqvarna, KTM and Honda were the three manufacturers that offered me the best deals. I wanted to stay with Red Bull so Husqvarna wasn't going to work. Honda wouldn't have been able to give me support for the

Spanish championship. I would have to go to the races with my father in one van. After the last two years I need to be free from all of these kinds of things, able to focus just on my racing. So, I have a one-year deal with KTM. I am very happy with my decision to return.

"Much has changed since I was last with KTM. I am a father now. Dan, my son, is amazing. I want to get back on the podium and to take my son there with me. My job is a professional motorcycle rider and that hasn't changed. In fact, I have more motivation to fight for a championship now – I have not only my future to



think about now but also that of my family.

"In the beginning I was told that there was only one place for me in the KTM team. It made no sense to go in E1 because Cristobal Guerrero – who is Spanish – is in that class. I didn't want to return to the team and tell them what class I wanted to race in. I was happy just to be back with the team. That opportunity was in E3 and wasn't going to be on a two-stroke.

"So, I was expecting to race on the 500 again in 2013. But it is a bike that I've had success on before – winning two world titles. So I knew the bike would be good. My mechanic and I were getting ready for another year on the tractor. But after one month the team called me to say that Cristobal would go to E1 so there was a place for me in Enduro 2 with the 350. I decided straight away that was what I wanted to do.

"I've never won an E2 title which is something I really want to do. That is one of the things that gives me great motivation for this season. I had helped with the development of this bike before I left KTM in 2012 but I'd never raced one. I like the bike a lot.

"The Enduro 2 class will be very competitive. Everyone knows that. In E1 and E3 people see Meo and Nambotin as the riders to beat. But in E2 there are five or six riders capable of winning. I have a lot of respect for all of my rivals – especially my team-mate Johnny Aubert. He has had three difficult seasons and has been working very hard to turn things around this year. Pela Renet – the defending champion – will be strong again and hard to beat. There is also David Knight, Alex Salvini, Ortol Mena. It's going to be an exciting year..."





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INTERVIEWS BY JP O'CONNELL PHOTO BY OLAF PIGNATARO/RED BULL CONTENT POOL

DBR: Who would you like to play you in a film?
TP: "That's a good question – Adam Sandler."
JVV: "I think I would like Jessica Biel."

DBR: What was the last lie that you told and who was it to?
TP: "Haha good question! That was probably to my mom and I said 'no I'll never try that again!'"
JVV: "I think that I told my mom that I wasn't sick here on tour anymore – she gets really concerned about me being away and being sick!"

DBR: Could you check your own valve clearances?
TP: "I don't even know what that is!"
JVV: "No, I rely on someone better than me to check my motorcycles. I mean I can do the basics but anything important I leave to someone who knows what they're doing."

DBR: Something you eat that you know you shouldn't?
TP: "[Laughing] Does beer count?"
JVV: "Haha that would be chips, ketchup and mayo – all the time!"

DBR: If you could spend a day as anyone else in the world who would it be?
TP: "Actually that's pretty much one that I'd like to spend in my shoes – I'm livin' the dream."
JVV: "I think I would probably want to be Pink because she is amazing and I would love to know what it's like to be able to sing."

DBR: Do you own a pair of pyjamas?
TP: "Nah no need. Who sleeps?"
JVV: "I do but they're back home, I don't travel with them as it's more weight in my luggage."

DBR: Something about yourself that nobody else knows?
TP: "That's what the internet is for. I learn something about me every time I go on there!"
JVV: "That I'm very superstitious."

DBR: What car would you drive if money were no object?
TP: "As a race car driver I drive really awesome cars really fast and at 18 I learned that that doesn't work on the road. I don't want to have a fast car and that's why I stay safe with the truck."
JVV: "[Laughing] That would be my Chevy Colorado of course!"

DBR: What's been your worst crash and injury combo?
TP: "You see the beauty of the worst crash and injury is that you don't remember and if you don't remember then it never happened!"
JVV: "Every injury for me is a bad one because it leaves me on the sidelines watching my friends and being very grumpy."

DBR: If you could change anything about yourself what would it be?
TP: "Mat Hoffman said it the best – 'can you imagine if we had the experience we have now and the bodies that can actually continue on in the sports that we love!'"
JVV: "I'd like to be more durable – more unbreakable so to speak."

DBR: If you could meet any person – dead or alive – who would it be?
TP: "Shane McConkey. He was a true inspiration and someone that I looked up to because not only was he a great free skier but he was so great at every other sport that he did. I'd liked to have met him and talked to him but unfortunately he passed away in a base jumping accident."
JVV: "I'd like to meet Janice Joplin."

DBR: Are you superstitious and do you have a pre-show ritual?
TP: "I used to be but then I discovered I crashed no matter what!"
JVV: "Yes but I can't tell you what it is as that's part of it so it has to stay a secret or else it won't work anymore!"

DBR: If you could have any superpower for a week what would it be?
TP: "It would be to be able to heal instantaneously like Wolverine."
JVV: "Invincibility."

DBR: If you were shipwrecked on an Island, what three things would you want with you?
TP: "That's a good one, a motorcycle, my mechanic and my wife."
JVV: "Internet with my iPhone definitely, my lucky necklace and family."

DBR: What's been the most embarrassing thing you've done while drunk?
TP: "I made a bet that the loser had to get a tattoo and now I have a tattoo that says, 'Lost a Bet' on my ass!"
JVV: "Well most things you do while drunk you don't know about until someone else tells you!"

DBR: As regards life insurance what do you state your occupation as?
TP: "I don't even know what my occupation is, let alone how I'm going to state it! I'm a professional kitten herder – as a ring leader for the Nitro Circus I have to herd all these cats that are all going in different directions."
JVV: "A teacher!"

DBR: How often do you Google yourself?
TP: "Ha, I stay off the internet as much as possible. It did used to be a pick up line of mine though, Hi... and if they didn't know my name I'd be like Google me and then I'd come back 2 hours later. It was horrible but it was good!"
JVV: "Oh all the time because I want to see if there's more pictures. It can be hard to find cool pictures of yourself so Google your own name and things just appear."

DBR: Is pulling off a new trick better than sex?
TP: "Hmmm it depends on what trick."
JVV: "Yes!"



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BEST OF THE BEST!

WITH ALL FOUR ROUNDS NOW DONE AND DUSTED WE CELEBRATE THE VERY BEST OF THE INAUGURAL ARENACROSS CHAMPIONSHIP...

Words by **Sutty** and **Samuel Hobnob** Photos by **Sutty** and **Nuno Laranjeira**

At a time when cold and wintry weather – as well as the threat of a triple dip recession – has seen our collective mojo sink to an all time low the Arenacross series has been a real shot in the arm for the British motocross scene. Sold-out – or near as damn it – stadiums, awesome bar to bar race action and some of the best freestyle shows ever seen above this tiny island have made this Monster backed championship a must-see series – and almost 25,000 of you did so well done you and you and you and you and you and you and definitely you...

A special well done to Buildbase Honda's Adam Chatfield too as he becomes the first ever Arenacross Pro Class champion – although the result stays in doubt right up to the wire. After finishing a solid second behind Jack Brunell in Birmingham, Adam only has to finish sixth or better in Liverpool's main event to take the title – easy right?

But a less than stellar start as the 450 spins up coming out of the gate sees Adam mired deep in the pack and for reasons

unknown is being beaten about by fast Frenchman Charles Lefrancois. "Someone – I'm not sure if it was him or not – landed on my wrist on the first lap and I thought it was over right there and then," says Adam after. "Luckily although it hurt I was able to carry on and work my way through the pack."

While Chatfield methodically picked his way through the carnage Brunell led at the front and right up until the moment he binned it through a rhythm section on the very last lap the series result was still in doubt. "I didn't know he'd crashed and I wasn't sure what position I was in either," adds Adam. "When I lost two places in the very last corner I really thought I'd lost the championship – fortunately that wasn't the case!"

So we know Adam Chatfield's the 2013 Arenacross champion but who and what else rocked at this year's series? We grabbed each of the five champions to tell you about their championship and also polled a selection of pro racers about what they thought about important stuff and that. Their answers weren't particularly shocking but are pretty interesting nevertheless...

ADAM CHATFIELD – PRO CHAMPION

"I'm really happy to be crowned champion especially since I made such hard work of it in Liverpool – I really thought the championship was gone. The track was so rutty and technical and I had a terrible start – my worst one of the year; I was concentrating on the championship and I was riding tight but I got it done in the end and I'm so happy. I can't thank Dave Thorpe and the Buildbase Honda team enough – Ryan did an awesome job with the bike and I want to thank him, all the team sponsors and Bill Brown from Wulfsport who helped me out with a great package to come over here."

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Mitchell Lewis just managed to edge out Joe Jefferies to the BW85cc title

BEST TRACK

Getting the nod from the majority of our polled pro riders, the opening round's Dirt Wurx built circuit in the O2 was voted as their favourite – no doubt helped by the high speed section that took the racers out of the confines of the tight arena...

| | |
|------------|-----|
| London | 63% |
| Belfast | 25% |
| Liverpool | 6% |
| Birmingham | 6% |



WORST TRACK

The design of the track in Birmingham's LG Arena just didn't flow as well as the others and that layout coupled with wet dirt made round three the most unpopular with the riders.

| | |
|------------|-----|
| Birmingham | 46% |
| Liverpool | 30% |
| Belfast | 18% |
| London | 6% |



FAVOURITE CITY/VENUE

Although a handful of the local riders voted London's O2 as their favourite place to get down to business the bulk of our British Arenacross beef much preferred Belfast's Odyssey Arena which is always a popular stop on the indoor tour despite it being a blighter for most of us to get to...

| | |
|---------|-----|
| Belfast | 88% |
| London | 12% |



ROSSI BEARD - 65CC CHAMPION

"I'm so happy to win again in Liverpool and make it four from four. All my friends and family are here and my aunt even flew over from Spain. It's been a really great championship."

HOTTEST MONSTER GIRL

It's that age old question – blonde or brunette? Our racers couldn't decide either...

| | |
|--------|-----|
| Grace | 50% |
| Sophia | 50% |



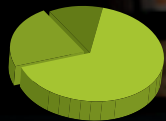
MITCHELL LEWIS - BW85CC CHAMPION

"It's awesome to be an Arenacross champion. I made a silly mistake at The O2 – I rushed the race, tried to do all the passing on the first lap, my front washed out and I had to come all the way back through to second which kept me in contention. Since then I've had my mind right. All the work we've put in over winter – especially down at Wheeldon where those guys have helped out so much – has paid off. Last week I was nervous – there was quite a lot of pressure – but I tried to put the championship out of my head and came into Liverpool with a positive attitude."

AWKWARD MOMENT # 1

When our band of bar banging brothers were asked who they'd be most disturbed to wake up next to out of Arenacross UK show presenters Tim Warwood, Jeff Perrett or Christian Stevenson it was the smooth talking Brummie whose face they'd least like to see on the pillow next to theirs as they opened their peepers for the first time that day.

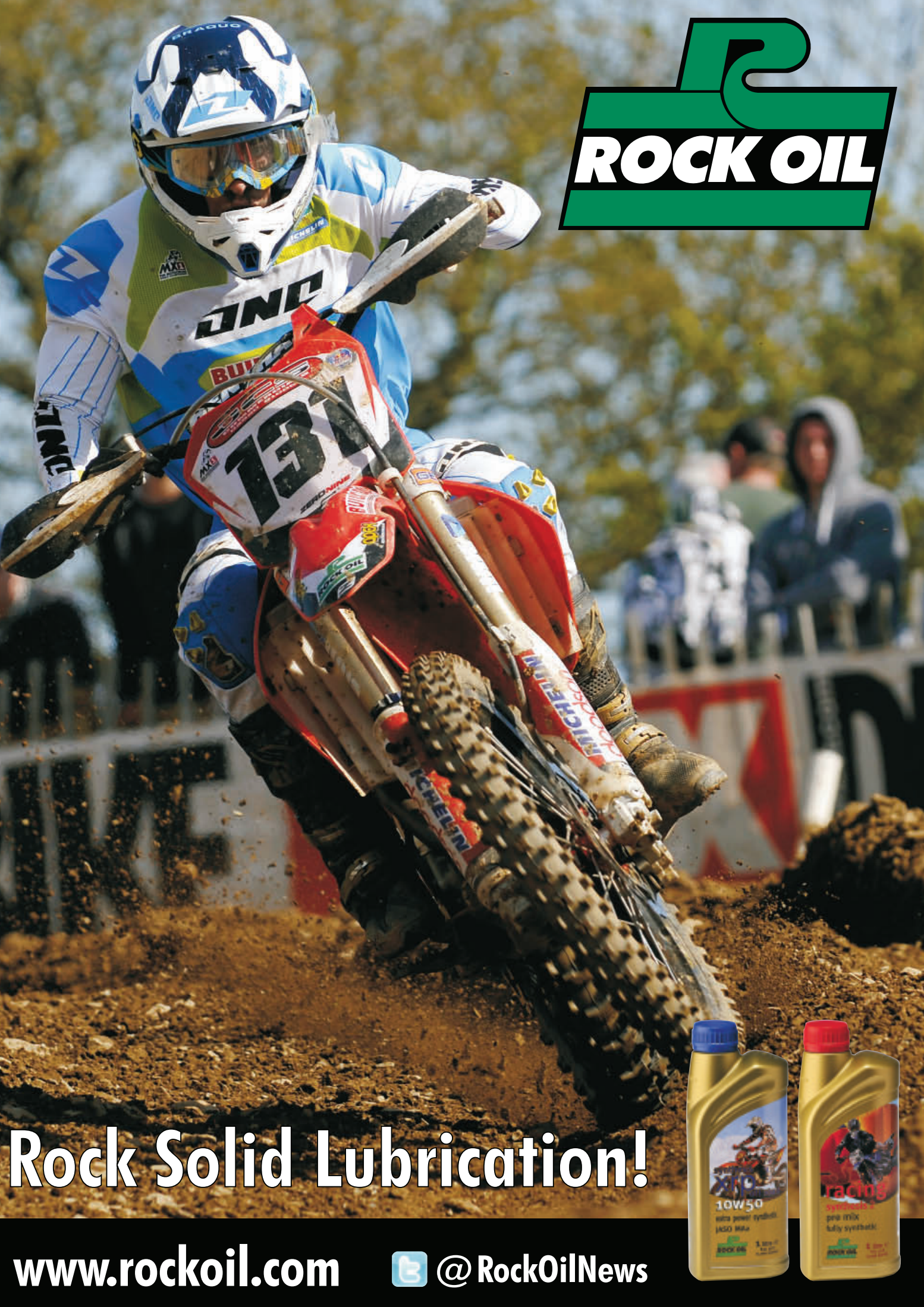
| | |
|---------------------|-----|
| Tim Warwood | 66% |
| Christian Stevenson | 22% |
| Jeff Perrett | 12% |



JAMES HARRISON - ROOKIES CHAMPION

"I wanted to win it last week in Birmingham but I crashed at the start so this week I decided to take it a bit steadier. I think I was in second through the first corner, got into the lead and then checked out a bit. It was a good race. The pressure was on me after last week's DNF – I think I needed top three to make sure of the title but I wanted to win it anyway."





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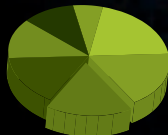
@RockOilNews



BEST TRICK!

We asked 100 per cent of DBR staff members who were present at the final round in Liverpool what their favourite FMX trick was from the list below. Here's how we voted...

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Chris Meyer's Suicide Flip | 20% |
| Chris Birch's Nac flip | 18% |
| Dan Whitby's Oxequationer | 17% |
| Disco Dave Wiggins' Turndown whip | 15% |
| Jamie Squibb's Nine o'clock Nac | 13% |
| Andre Villa's Holy Grab | 11% |
| Samson Eaton's Boner Air | 6% |



BEST CROWD

The city that had the best facilities also provided the best vibe in the mind of the riders who voted the sold out Belfast crowd as the people they enjoyed racing in front of the most. Everyone'll be pleased to know the series returns for two nights of racing there in 2014!

| | |
|----------------|------------|
| Belfast | 76% |
| London | 12% |
| Liverpool | 12% |



FINAL SERIES STANDINGS

PRO CLASS

| | | |
|---|-------------------------|----|
| 1 | Adam Chatfield | 74 |
| 2 | Neville Bradshaw | 68 |
| 3 | Jack Brunell | 64 |
| 4 | Martin Barr | 52 |
| 5 | Cyrille Coulton | 51 |
| 6 | Tom Church | 50 |

ROOKIES

| | | |
|---|-----------------------|----|
| 1 | James Harrison | 60 |
| 2 | Ben Putnam | 50 |
| 3 | George Clarke | 46 |
| 4 | Chris Bayliss | 46 |
| 5 | Luke Dean | 45 |
| 6 | Tony Saunders | 39 |

BW85CC

| | | |
|---|-----------------------|----|
| 1 | Mitchell Lewis | 60 |
| 2 | Joe Jefferies | 56 |
| 3 | Billy King | 48 |
| 4 | Taylor Hammal | 44 |
| 5 | Myles Jones | 40 |
| 6 | Luke Reading | 40 |

SW85CC

| | | |
|---|-----------------------|----|
| 1 | Dylan Woodcock | 60 |
| 2 | Tommy Clark | 47 |
| 3 | Ben Burrridge | 45 |
| 4 | Adam Collings | 41 |
| 5 | Callum Gasson | 40 |
| 6 | Harry Kimber | 36 |

65CC

| | | |
|---|-------------------------|----|
| 1 | Rossi Beard | 60 |
| 2 | Ike Carter | 50 |
| 3 | Preston Williams | 48 |
| 4 | Bobby Bruce | 44 |
| 5 | Kurtis Griffiths | 42 |
| 6 | Liam Brosnan | 39 |



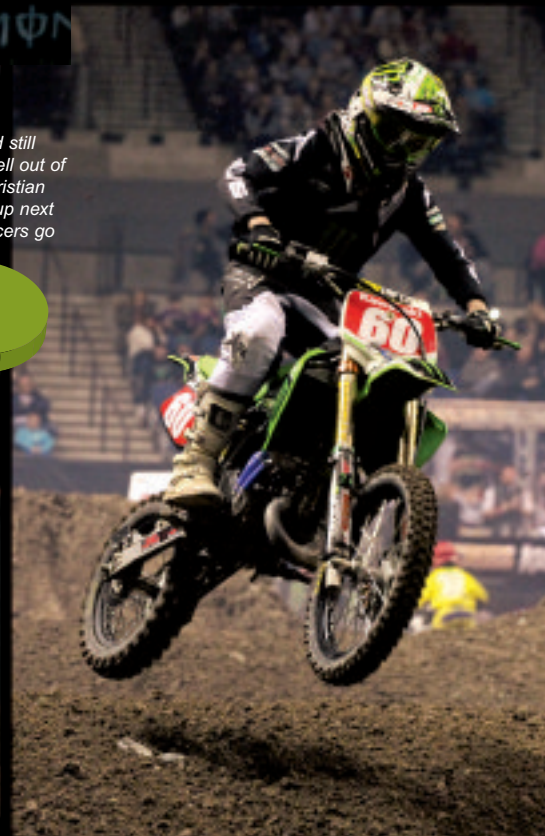
AWKWARD MOMENT #2

With the thought of waking up next to Warwood still spooking our indoor athletes we slipped in a 'well out of those three – Tim Warwood, Jeff Perrett or Christian Stevenson – who would you most like to wake up next to?'. Apparently 100 per cent of Arenacross racers go for a less hirsute kind of guy...

| | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Jeff Perrett | 100% |
|---------------------|-------------|



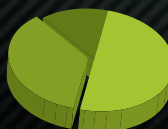
Adrian Lopes is the least popular racer on the tour



DIRTIEST RIDER

With Ashley Greedy not racing the 2013 indoor series it was up to Buildbase Honda's Frenchman fatale – Adrian Lopes – to pick up the award for being the series' dirtiest rider. Half those questioned picked the #15 racer as the guy they least wanted to go bar to bar with – ever! Let's hope series promoter E22 Sports invite him back again next year...

| | |
|---------------------|------------|
| Adrian Lopes | 50% |
| Martin Barr | 14% |
| Jack Brunell | 36% |



BEST DIRT

Although a little on the dry side if anything the dirt shipped in for the opening round of the championship at London's O2 proved to be the soil of choice for our Arenacrossers.

| | |
|---------------|------------|
| London | 67% |
| Liverpool | 13% |
| Birmingham | 13% |
| Belfast | 7% |



DYLAN WOODCOCK – SW85CC CHAMPION

"From the first round to the fourth round I've just been unstoppable really and all my family have been pushing me to win and egging me on. I won the title at round three in Birmingham but there was still pressure on me because I wanted to win four races from four. I've won indoor titles on 50s, 65s and now 85s – I want to keep winning them right through to the pro ranks."



Gautier Paulin will be looking to challenge for the MX1 world title

ENDLESS SUMMER!

Part One

YOUR YEAR IN MX PLANNED OUT...

Words by Suttu

They – whoever 'they' actually are – keep harping on about how great 2012 was for sport what with the Olympics and all that jazz. Screw that though because I put it to you that 2013's gonna be a darn sight better especially where motocross is concerned because despite spiralling into a triple dip recession (which admittedly is a bit of a

slap in the old titties) us UK motocross fans have never had it so good.

And I can claim that with a straight face because we have three great domestic championships happening right here in Blighty and even if you don't fancy travelling abroad to see the world championships they're way more accessible to fans through the wonders of the internet (which they even have on

TVs now) and TV (which you can even watch on the internet) than ever before too. Golden times I tell thee...

To warm you up for the delights in store we've prepared a two part planner that takes you through the full season major event by major event. This month we run through March, April, May and June while next month July through October will get a good going over.

MARCH 2

LOSAIL, QATAR

MXGP #1

We all thought the opening grand prix of the year was gonna be a sandy affair but World Motocross Grand Prix track designer Greg Atkins reckons "the area there is just rock". Apparently they've imported in a lot of different types of soil and have built the track with good quality dirt. Initial video clips on YouTube hopefully don't do the circuit justice as from what I've seen it looks crap – let's pray I'm wrong. Still, the floodlit racing (the event goes off on Saturday evening local time) and mixed capacity 'super final' should make the opening round of the MX1 and MX2 world championships well worth watching. Motors TV or www.mx-life.tv it is then...

MARCH 10

SI RACHA, THAILAND

MXGP #2

PRESTON DOCKS, LANCASHIRE

BRIT MASTERS #1

The second weekend of the season sees our first clash as the Thai GP and the first round of the Wulfsport British Masters go head to head. The opening gambit of the Masters could well be a good one as British battlers use it as an opportunity for a final tune up before the Maxxis begins at FatCat one week later – the going at Preston Docks is not too dissimilar from the South Yorkshire sand pit either so expect a good entry. As always there's a bumper line-up of amateur racers too so all in all it should be a top weekend. PR2 2HW is where you need to be headed.

Meanwhile over in Thailand the second round of the world series will be going off. Not much is known about the Si Racha race track although Atkins reckons the soil is very close to the red loam of Agueda which should make for a very nice racing surface no matter what the layout is like. Thailand is seven hours ahead of the UK so tune in live on Motors TV or www.mx-life.tv and then have a leisurely breakfast and head to Preston innit? You're welcome...

MARCH 17

FATCAT MOTOPARC, YORKSHIRE

BRIT MX #1

There's only one place to be this weekend and that's at FatCat Motoparc in sunny South Yorkshire where the Maxxis British Championships will be kicking off in fine style! The MX1 class is already packed out with top talent and FatCat will have a couple more wildcards as Tommy Searle and Shaun Simpson are thrown into a mix that already contains Brad Anderson, Steve Ramon, Jon Barragan, Tanel Leok, Nico Aubin, Gert Krestinov, Jason Dougan and Kristian Whatley. It's gonna be epic!

Elliott Banks-Browne's back in MX2 to defend his crown and he'll no doubt have his hands full with Mel Pocock, Neville Bradshaw, Steven Lenoir, Stephen Sword, Martin Barr, Graeme Irwin, Bryan MacKenzie and the ever improving Suffolk speedsters – James Cottrell and Lewis Tombs.

As well as the two main championships the UK's top nippers will be lining up for a shot at MX2 glory n'all. FatCat Motoparc can be found just off Junction 4 of the M18 and you can't watch this one live on telly or t'internet so make sure you're there at noon by the latest as that's when the first championship race leaves the line.

MARCH 24

CANADA HEIGHTS, KENT

BRIT MX #2

Just one week after the series opener the Maxxis resumes at Canada Heights in Kent. Always one of the better attended races of the year the jump-filled hillside venue offers up some cracking racing and usually a surprise or two too! You can find Canada Heights just off junction 3 of the M25 at the A20/M20/M25 interchange. Follow the signs for Brands Hatch then swing off down Button Street. Post code is BR8 8DX.



Marty Barr's back to MX2



Swordy's another old timer to slip down to the 250F class



A move to KTM won't slow down Xavier Boog



Jake Nicholls wants to be MX2 world champ – 2013 is his last shot!



Pocock and EBB will be waging war in the GPs this year



Irwin moves to Suzuki

Clement Desalle will be knocking lumps out of the MX1 class



APRIL 1

VALKENSWAARD, THE NETHERLANDS

MXGP #3

The world championships return to Europe for round three. Valkenswaard – which is near Eindhoven in the south of the Netherlands – is traditionally one of the busier and better GPs of the year and no matter if it's wet or dry is guaranteed to provide some pukka racing action. For many this is where the season starts proper after the flyaway freak shows and there'll be full line ups and everything. As well as MX1 and MX2 races the MX3 and WMX series kick off here n'all but remember April 1 is not only Fool's Day but also Easter Monday...

APRIL 7

LYNG, NORFOLK

BRIT MX #3

From the Netherlands we swing back over to Norfolk for round three of the Maxxis. Lyng is traditionally one of the fastest and roughest circuits on the British championship calendar and suits the fit and the fearless. NR9 5AL is the place to be...

APRIL 14

ARCO DI TRENTO, ITALY

MXGP #4

For the fourth round of the world championship the tour heads to Arco di Trento in the very north of Italy. Overlooked by rocky peaks the circuit is surprisingly not concrete-hard like most Italian race tracks and at the recent Italian championship round stayed pretty loose and got pretty rough. Arco di Trento is around 100 miles north west of tourist hotspot Venice although you'll probably do better to get a flight to Verona which is only 50 miles south of the track if your only reason for visiting is the GP itself.

APRIL 21

LANDRAKE, CORNWALL

RBPB #1

TBA, TBA

MXGP #5

With a whole heap of TBA crap that's not worth talking about for the fifth round of the GPs let's concentrate on the opening round of the Red Bull Pro Nationals which is due to go off at Landrake in Cornwall instead. The RBPBs have been gaining momentum over the past couple of years and with a stronger than ever entry lined up for 2013 it should be a very interesting series as Neville Bradshaw and Nico Aubin look to defend their crowns. Neither guy's gonna have it easy though and with the mixed-capacity motos almost anything can happen as the depth of talent is so deep. There is a danger that with Aubin, Steve Ramon and Stephen Sword all in their corner this championship could turn into a Buildbase benefit but I wouldn't bet against Bradshaw, Brad Ando, Marty Barr, Kristian Whatley and Steven Lenoir sticking their oars in either. Fantastic!

APRIL 28

FOXHILL, WILTSHIRE

BRIT MASTERS #2

The British Masters crew offer up another warm up for the Maxxis boys with their second round that's held at Foxhill a full five weeks before the official British championships hits the Swindon super venue! With nowt else on – no GPs or bugger all – it looks like Ken and the crew could well reap the benefits of a bumper entry. Foxhill – or Wulf Mountains as it'll be known on this weekend by me and maybe Nev Bradshaw – can be found at SN4 ODR or just off junction 15 of the M4 if you're old fashioned and that.

MAY 5

AGUEDA, PORTUGAL

MXGP #6

With its red dirt, challenging layout and close proximity to the touristic Atlantic coast it's little wonder that the Portuguese stop of the WC – that's world championships – is a popular one with riders, fans and media moguls like Alex Hodgkinson who just loves to get there early, drive to the beach and lounge around in his undercrackers. True story! There's plenty of good things to be seen too though as the Agueda circuit always seems to coax the very best out of the racers – just ask Jeffrey Herlings and Rui Goncalves *wink*.

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MAY 12

MILTON PARK, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

BRIT MX #4

Everyone seems to hate Milton Park with a passion and while there's no denying that it's a wee bit tight and twisty it's actually really not all that bad – well, not for us onlookers at least. For the two years the ACU's flagship venue has been on the British championship calendar the racing has been great to watch although admittedly we've been very lucky with the weather both times and the sun does make everything better. But with nowt else on though what are you gonna do? Load up the car and head to NN7 3AP – it really is the place to be...

MAY 19

BETO CARRERO, BRAZIL

MXGP #7

TBA, TBA

RBPB #2

After it was turned into a swamp by heavy rains we really didn't get to see how good the Beto Carrero circuit actually was. The track is built in the southern hemisphere's largest theme park – Beto Carrero World – and the place is apparently awesome (I say apparently as the DBR travel budget doesn't spread to trips to South America apparently). It does reach to the four corners of the UK though and unless the RBPBs go overseas we'll definitely be at round two of the championship – wherever that happens to be. Erm...

MAY 26

GUADALAJARA, MEXICO

MXGP #8

WHITBY, YORKSHIRE

BRIT MASTERS #3

The British Masters team head to Whitby for round three of their series and a track that's perched high above the town and looks out over Whitby Abbey and the North Sea. Although the view is more Emmerdale than Beverly Hills 90210 the track is definitely way AMA with a technical layout that's marked with those flexible yellow Acerbis markers that the Yanks just love to ride on t'wrong side of. Hopefully the Masters lads can master riding between 'em. You can see if they're capable by heading over to YO21 1TN.

And when you get home from there tune in to Motors TV for round eight of the MX1 and MX2 world championships. Last year's Mexican GP was quite frankly terrible as an overall event but the racing on Sunday was some of the best seen all season – go figure. With over a year to make things better, race promoter Sebastien Tortelli should have everything lined up this time around and hopefully the TV coverage'll be better n'all because last year's was just unwatchable – even to me and I'm a total motocross geek.

JUNE 2

FOXHILL, WILTSHIRE

BRIT MX #5

The start of June is all about Maxxis action at Foxhill and if previous editions are anything to go by then we should be in for another good day's racing. I've said it before and I'll say it again – the entry for this year's Brit champs is off the hook and by mid-summer everyone will definitely have settled in on their new rides and will be ready to push hard. Someone who never struggles to push hard at Foxhill is Brad Anderson but would you really bet against Tanel Leok or Jonathan Barragan taking the win? It's gonna be a scorcher so make sure you're there with fresh underwear in case the excitement gets too much! Although the post code won't have changed since the Masters visited in April here it is again – SN4 0DR! Hurrah!

JUNE 9

ERNEE, FRANCE

MXGP #9

Undoubtedly one of the best tracks in France, Ernee hosts the ninth round of the world series – the first to be held back in Europe after the transatlantic jaunt. With 95 per cent of the track on a hillside viewing at this uber technical circuit is excellent and with the layout being so tricky there's always plenty to see. Quite similar to Saint Jean d'Angely the track features several huge drop offs and tabletops and is also lethal in the wet. Ernee is quite easy to get to and located between Rennes and Le Mans in the north of the country. You're looking at a five hour drive from Calais or less if you sail to Le Havre or Saint Malo.



Alex Snow's concentrating on domestic bliss!



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Round 7 Long Lane 22 September
Round 8 Fatcats 6 October

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JUNE 16

MAGGIORA, ITALY

MXGP # 10

HAWKSTONE PARK, SHROPSHIRE

BRIT MASTERS #4

Students of the sport will no doubt recognise Maggiora as being the name of the battleground on which the yanks spanked the rest of the world in the 1986 Motocross des Nations. The place has lain dormant since the early 1990s but with nostalgia being big business right now has found its way back on the 2013 MX1/MX2 calendar. If it's owl like we remember then that can only be a positive thing but if it's not we can just point the finger at Youthstream – they get blamed for everything else they do so why not add a little more at their door.

While the GP goes off in Italy another classic venue gets an airing right here in the UK as the fourth round of the British Masters happens at Hawkstone Park. With the International being a total no go this will be the first big meeting of the year at Hawkstone ahead of the Maxxis and Red Bull events which again might bolster pro class entries. Regardless of how strong that is though with all the amateur and youth action it'll still be an action packed weekend...

JUNE 23

DESERTMARTIN, NORTHERN IRELAND

BRIT MX #6

One of the toughest tracks in the Maxxis series Porter's Pit is a real rollercoaster of a ride with its bumps, jumps n' lumps that really sorts the champs out from the chumps. As the only 'overseas' race on the schedule (for us mainlanders anyway) Desertmartin takes a little extra planning to get to but don't let that put you off because there are loads of cheap flights and ferry deals knocking about if you look hard enough. For those of you who really wanna know BT45 5QW is the post code where you'll find this show – so you will be sure.

JUNE 30

UDDEVALLA, SWEDEN

MXGP # 11

TBA, TBA

RBPN #3

From the country that brought you pine flat-pack furniture, moose meatballs and safer motoring comes the most northerly grand prix of the year – Uddevalla! Famous for the rocky outcrop that overlooks the circuit (and is perennially packed out with Swedes searching for a better view) this super slick circuit often gets very one-lined especially if it's wet – which it quite often is. Catch a flight to Stockholm and come join the fun – the Swedish GP has a great vibe and you couldn't hope to meet friendlier people.

There's really not much to say about another TBA on the RBPN calendar. Your best bet for regular updates is to sign up to www.e22sports.com or keep an eye on www.dirtbikerider.com for all the latest news as it happens...

Valentin Teillet could stir things up in MX2



Cumbria's #2 pest
controller Jamie Law



Jason Dougan's planning a
full assault on the MX1
world championship

MID-TERM REPORTS

NOW HALFWAY THROUGH THE AMA SX SEASON IT'S TIME
TO ISSUE SOME REPORT CARDS FOR THE CLASS OF 2013...

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY STEVE COX

Believe it or not we're already eight rounds in to the 2013 AMA Supercross series which is just one race short of the halfway mark. So far we've seen some remarkable – and some fairly unremarkable – performances as the series has settled in and I think it's fair to say that the formbook has been ripped to pieces with many of the major players

way off where we expected them to be.

The biggest shock to many will be the solid start to the year Davi Millsaps has banged in and the Rockstar Energy Suzuki rider sits on a handy 22 point lead over defending champ Ryan Villopoto who has had a shaky start to the season. And he's not the only pre-season favourite who's not delivering what we expected while some guys like Trey Canard and

Justin Barcia are perhaps over performing a little bit.

While you could argue that it's only the series standings that matter at the end of the day we figured that's quite a boring way to look at things so we got our US Editor Steve Cox to fill out a report card for the riders that really count in both the 450SX and 250SX West classes. Here's what he had to say about each of them...



Name: Anderson, Jason
Class: 250 West

Comments: In his third season as a pro Jason Anderson has overcome a lot already. He nearly quit during his rookie year because he was shaken up so bad by the injury of his team-mate Ian Trettel. Eventually, he gathered himself back up and put in some solid rides in his second season. Now, it's time for him to put in some results and he delivered at Anaheim 1 with a solid fourth place behind three of the best supercross racers in the world. Then, he crashed out of a transfer position in the LCQ in Phoenix and missed the main. Undaunted, he's

scored top fives in the four races to follow and sits fourth in points.

Improvement needed: Jason just needs to avoid missing main events. If he matched his worst finish of the year in Phoenix he'd be third in points right now within striking distance of the leaders. His intensity is great and he's riding really well.

Starts: B
Speed: A
Agility: A-
Effort: A+

Average grade: A-



Name: Anstie, Max
Class: 250 West

Comments: Max Anstie came out at Anaheim 1 like a ball of fire grabbing ninth place in a very stacked field. People noticed. But it's been downhill from there for the very talented ginger. He landed outside the top 10 in Phoenix but was still solid overall then finished 17th at Anaheim 2. After that, things fell apart a bit in Oakland when he crashed out of qualifying position in his heat then went off the track in the sand section while trying to rush passes early in the LCQ. He missed the main but rebounded at Anaheim 3 to match his

result at Anaheim 1 before heading back to England.

Improvement needed: Anstie is a racer who has everything he needs in order to be successful and he definitely has the hardest stuff to get – talent, speed and style. He has nearly all of the puzzle pieces needed but something always seems to prevent him from putting them all together.

Starts: C-
Speed: B-
Agility: B-
Effort: C+

Average grade: C+



Name: Barcia, Justin
Class: 450

Comments: Bam Bam is actually doing pretty much what a lot of guys expected. You don't get that nickname for nothing. He's really fast, as expected, and he crashes quite a bit, as expected. He was seventh at round one thanks to a crash, then won round two, then scored a DNF two weekends in a row due to crashes. And they were big. The second one wasn't actually his fault as Dungey swerved into him in the whoops off of the start and caught Barcia's front-brake lever. Barcia's still a contender for the win

every time he stays off the ground - at least if he gets a good start.

Improvement needed:

Like most of the others contenders if Barcia had got better start in his bad races he would've stood a much better chance at staying off the ground. But when he starts inside the top five he always finishes on the podium which proves the point...

Starts: C
Speed: A
Agility: A
Effort: A

Average grade: B



Name: Canard, Trey
Class: 450

Comments: Canard started out the season swinging at Anaheim 1 and fighting it out for the win on his way to a second place finish. He followed that with another runner-up finish at round three but things got kind of bleak for a while after that. Canard changed some settings on his factory CRF450R after Anaheim 2 and although the settings worked at the test track they didn't translate well to racing for one reason or another so he's now returned to his original settings.

Improvement needed:
Canard needs to get his

bike sorted out first and foremost. He went back to his Anaheim 1 settings at Atlanta and it was the first time he finished in the top five since round four and he did it after starting mid-pack. If he gets a start with these settings he should have a real shot at winning. And once he wins one it could make for a long rest of the season for the rest of the guys in the championship chase.

Starts: B-
Speed: A-
Agility: B
Effort: A

Average grade: B+



Name: Dungey, Ryan
Class: 450

Comments: Ryan Dungey has rarely been an unstoppable force when everyone is healthy. Dungey's strength has always been his consistency. He may not win a ton of races but he's always on the podium. That's not true this year. Yes, he has five podium finishes in eight rounds - including one win - but his other finishes are an eighth place and sixth twice. When your competition is winning more and more consistent, you lose.

Improvement needed: To start with Dungey needs to get better starts.

He's capable of it, as he showed at Anaheim 3 when he got the last gate pick and still pulled the holeshot and took the win. Away from that, he has simply not been on the pace of the other top guys. When he's stuck in the pack he can't move forward as well as other guys such as Trey Canard. He needs to work on being more aggressive if he wants to stay in the title hunt.

Starts: B-
Speed: B+
Agility: A
Effort: A

Average grade: B



Name: Hansen, Josh
Class: 450

Comments: Josh Hansen is literally one of the nicest guys in the pits at any AMA event but he simply lacks focus on the racetrack. His sponsors - including Monster Energy - pay him mostly for his X Games performances but he was giving racing yet another shot with the team known last year as Jeff Ward Racing, owned and financed primarily by oil millionaire Mike Kranyak. Things were going decent at Anaheim 1, as he was running second in the LCQ then crashed out of a transfer spot. He sat out Phoenix then barely qualified for the night program at

Anaheim 2. The official story from the team after that was that he was sick but the team folded after the Arlington round.

Improvement needed:

Hansen has all of the talent in the world and he's truly great on a dirt bike when he's motivated. The problem is that he never seems to be motivated anymore. He has the talent and lineage but not the desire.

Starts: F
Speed: C
Agility: C-
Effort: F

Average grade: D-



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Name: Millsaps, David
Class: 450

Comments: At almost the halfway point in the championship David Millsaps' performance is still such a surprise for much of the fanbase and media that they're still talking about when Stewart, Reed, Villopoto and Dungey are going to get going and start putting the hurt on him. Meanwhile, Millsaps is just riding his dirt bike really well. In eight rounds he has finished off the podium once. And that was fourth place at Anaheim 2. In the other seven races he's won twice, gotten third twice, and gotten second three times.

Improvement needed: There have been a couple of occasions when Millsaps could've pushed and maybe pulled off a win instead of settling for second place and it's tempting to say that he should've done that. Then again he has a 22-point lead on the rest of the field and a chunk of that is because others have thrown it away while doing just that.

Starts: A
Speed: A
Agility: A
Effort: A

Average grade: A



Name: Osborne, Zach
Class: 250 West

Comments: Zach Osborne isn't new to supercross but it's been a while. Yes, he raced a good chunk of the 250cc West last year which helped him to land his ride at GEICO Honda in 2013 but for someone who has spent the bulk of the last half-decade racing overseas he has been solid. He always seems to be in the battle near the front of the pack somewhere with his best finish coming at Anaheim 2 where he was fourth.

Improvement needed: Osborne flat out just needs some starts. Due to

his poor starts he has been to a couple LCQs and he keeps getting caught up in the mess in the middle of the pack which slows him (or knocks him) down. At Oakland in particular Osborne qualified third-fastest in front of his team-mate Tomac, finished second in his heat then started 12th in the main on his way to 10th. That is a microcosm of his season so far.

Starts: C
Speed: A-
Agility: B
Effort: A+

Average grade: B



Name: Reed, Chad
Class: 450

Comments: Reed is having similar issues to Canard except that he has yet to find settings that he truly likes. You've got to remember when Reed crashed out of the championship last year he was giving Villopoto everything he could handle but right now he's having trouble even finding the podium. Prior to the start of the season Reed got on the podium 80 per cent of the time in his supercross career but this year he's only visited it once and he doesn't seem to be enjoying his racing at all.

Improvement needed: Reed needs to figure his bike out first and foremost but more importantly Reed needs to become 'Happy Chad' again. Happy Chad is fast Chad. The problem is that he's not going to be Happy Chad until he sorts his bike out. Oh, and he needs to figure out his starts too or else 2013 is gonna be a very long - and possibly his very final - year.

Starts: C-
Speed: B+
Agility: B
Effort: B

Average grade: B-



Name: Roczen, Ken
Class: 250 West

Comments: Ken Roczen isn't just fast - he's the most consistent racer in AMA Supercross right now. Sure, it's easier to be consistent in a divisional 250cc class as opposed to the national 450cc class but it's true nonetheless. He started off the year with three runner-up finishes then took two consecutive wins and then finished second at round six. In six rounds he has yet to finish worse than second. Because of that - and his speed - he has a 17 point lead with only three rounds left to run. Ken's consistency is going to make it very

hard for Tomac to take the title.

Improvement needed: It's hard to point out something that Roczen needs to improve right now. His riding is precise and incredibly fast and he's patient too. His starts are solid and he's even great with the media and fans. If anything was going better for him the 250SX West would be a yawner.

Starts: A
Speed: A
Agility: A+
Effort: A+

Average grade: A+



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Name: Seely, Cole
Class: 250 West

Comments: Cole Seely came into the 2013 season as a dark horse for the 250SX West championship even after his huge crash in practice at Salt Lake City last year that put him out of racing with internal injuries for almost 12 months. Along with the two guys ahead of him in points he was incredibly consistent at the first four rounds of the series grabbing a fourth (round 2), two thirds and a second but crashes plagued him at Anaheim 3 and San Diego as he grew restless in his search for wins. Still, it's been a solid start to the year for

Cole and he's edging closer to victory circle all the time.

Improvement needed:

Patience would've served Seely well at rounds five and six but he came into this season not just looking for podiums or wins - he was looking for a championship. He knew he had to start winning races to win the title and pushing the pace cost him. Maybe next year.

Starts: B+

Speed: A

Agility: A-

Effort: A

Average grade: A



Name: Stewart, James
Class: 450

Comments: Stewart's season started off worse than any other championship hopeful when he tore his ACL in practice at Anaheim 1. He's been toughing it out but without starts he was terrible through the first four rounds. After that, though, he battled for podiums at rounds five and six finishing fourth both times and then won his heat race in Dallas before his bike broke on the line in the main event. He pulled through in Atlanta the following week with a win in his heat followed by a start to finish main event victory.

Improvement needed:

Most of the improvement Stewart needed to make he has already made. He needed to improve his starts so he and his dad started working on them and they got better. Really good, actually. He needed to get his bike better for him and he's done that too. Now, the questions are if he can keep it up and if it's possible for him to chase down Millsaps.

Starts: C-

Speed: A

Agility: A

Effort: A

Average grade: B-



Name: Tomac, Eli
Class: 250 West

Comments: Just like last year it seems that Eli Tomac's biggest threat to Eli Tomac is Eli Tomac. He was unstoppable until he tossed himself on his head in the whoops at round four in Oakland. He scored last place there then followed that with a third at Anaheim 3 and a fourth win in six races at San Diego but he needs help to get back into the title chase.

Improvement needed:

At the races, Tomac seems to be fast all day long, but he starts out pretty ragged in the first practice and smoothes out as the day goes on. He's

always in a hurry. While this seems obvious for a racer, hurrying is what caused him to crash in Oakland, as he was trying to work forward from a bad start and got ahead of himself. If he could calm down and let the races come to him, he would be much better off in the long run. He's definitely not lacking speed. He hopes to learn patience racing a 450 on the East coast.

Starts: A-

Speed: A+

Agility: B

Effort: A

Average grade: A-



Name: Villopoto, Ryan
Class: 250 West

Comments: Villopoto has had his boot on the neck of his competition almost continually since the start of the 2011 season. He won Anaheim 1 that year then dominated the championship and continued that outdoors. He did the same in 2012 except he got hurt before the outdoor championship started. This year, he started out at a deficit at Anaheim 1 and has been trying to make up ground ever since. He's won more than anyone at this point but besides his three wins in eight races he's only been on the podium two other times.

Improvement needed: First off, Villopoto needs much better starts. Every time he gets into a bad situation it's because he's messing around mid-pack with guys he shouldn't be racing with. But ultimately, he just needs to keep beating Davi Millsaps which he has done every time he's finished on the podium. Ryan also needs to be lacking confidence which is most unlike him.

Starts: C

Speed: A+

Agility: A

Effort: A

Average grade: B+

[illegible]

all more than worthy of honourable mentions. Added into the mix of Brits that have played their part in dominating events like Hell's Gate, Erzberg and Romaniacs are brothers Ben and Dan Hemingway. Motorcycle journeymen with roots in trials the duo have risen to the many challenges of competing on some of the world's hardest events as DBR finds out...

*Ben and Dan are Beta's
top boys on the hard
enduro race scene*

ANCE!



DBR: What's your background – what did you do before hard enduro?

BH: "I've been riding trials since I was about eight. After coming through the youth ranks I then went on to do about 10 years on the world circuit. It was a tough era back then with about 40 riders showing up to every round. And although I never scored a point I was always knocking on the door of a top 15 result. In 2005 I stopped racing and spent a season acting as minder for Dougie Lampkin when he rode for Honda but I missed riding bikes and wanted to get back to racing again."

DH: "I started out riding trials with Dougie when I was about 10 years old. I got some decent results and went to the European championships with Dougie and Graham Jarvis in a transit van when we were about 16. When Ben was old enough he started to come but after a couple of years I could see he was struggling to progress without a minder so I stepped in. I still rode and won some French International events but spent about 10 years with him on the world scene. In 2003, I got married, bought a house and tried to be normal but once you've been racing that long it's hard to quit."

DBR: How did you get started in hard enduro?

BH: "In 2006 I'd finished with trials and was sort of drifting along. I'd dabbled with mountain biking, raced the Mega Avalanche in France and finished 55th out of 1500 riders but was still looking for something else. Then one day Martin Craven told us about Erzberg over a few beers. He showed us a DVD of the event and told us we had to go race it. Initially we said he was crazy but after a bit of thought we decided to give it a go. The following year we bought some bikes and entered it. I finished fourth overall and Dan was seventh. The race was nothing like we'd ever experience before – it was nuts. We were hooked from then on."

DBR: Fourth overall at Erzberg at your first attempt – that's impressive. Did that result come as a surprise?

BH: "I didn't really know what to expect going there. After qualifying on the front row I thought I could at least finish. On race day the weather was so hot – the quarry was baking. It was also Dougie Lampkin's first time there and about halfway around he collapsed from the heat. When I reached him the marshal told me to stop because they were cancelling the race. I wasn't sure what to do, I didn't want to leave Doug but

I didn't want to stop – I was in fourth! Once Doug came around I carried on and finished the race."

DBR: What's been the biggest hurdle you've had to overcome in hard enduro?

DH: "Moving from trials to enduro has been a strange transition. It's easy to jump on an enduro bike and ride fast but stepping up to a decent race pace is tough. I'm still struggling with my corner speed. At times I don't know whether to sit down or stand up and almost trip over myself trying to decide. I'm still crap at jumping too. It's weird but learning bike control in the air is a hard thing to do but I'm getting better at it. Personally, my strongest ability has always been in the rocks. I know I've got the edge on a lot of people in places like Karl's Diner at Erzberg. I love that stuff – I enjoy the misery of it."

DBR: What was the highlight of your 2012 season?

BH: "Standing on the podium at Erzberg was a massive result for me. It's the biggest event on the calendar and to get a top three was incredible. Since I've raced there I've always managed to finish inside the top five and though I joked about ending up on the podium deep down I felt it was possible. Everything went perfect during the race and coming into the final section 'Dynamite' I knew exactly what position I was in. Once I rode out of that section I knew third was safe, I knew I couldn't be beaten and then the enormity of the result began to hit me. I was ecstatic – Erzberg has been the biggest highlight of my career."

DH: "I rode well at The Tough One and then got an invite to ride the Red Bull City Scramble in New Zealand. But two weeks before it I was out training and broke my foot. The doctors told me my season was done and to forget about racing but Erzberg was playing on my mind – I'd already paid for the entry. Two weeks before the race, they took the cast off my foot and advised me to rest up for another four weeks. I said okay but then went anyway to see if I could ride. In the end I managed to finish seventh. I was delighted with that result – it was almost as good as winning. After being off the bike for so long and not even knowing if I could ride... finishing seventh was awesome."

DBR: Did competing as complete privateers – paying to compete – make getting those results more rewarding despite there being no prize money?

DH: "Riding bikes is our passion and I think it always will be. We've had some help with small bits and pieces during the years but we basically work to fund our racing aspirations. As a full on privateer – up until this season – all my money went into racing. My wife didn't get that new bathroom she was promised and now with two young lads coming along she probably still won't but we're a racing family and love what we do. Being able to sustain that at the highest level possible is the icing on the cake for us."

DBR: How did the deal with the Beta Extreme Team come about?

BH: "Throughout my trials career I've always rode Beta and during 2012 I was also acting as the minder for James Dabill in the World Trails Championship. Being in and out of the factory I'd caught wind of some Chinese whispers about a two-stroke bike being built. Two months before the season ended some of the mechanics finally showed me images of the new bike. It got me a bit excited to know that something was happening. A few weeks later I got a phone call from an Italian team. Initially they wouldn't confirm what bike they were going to use but wanted Dan and myself to be on the team. A couple of weeks passed and they officially asked

us to race for them on Beta machinery – it's seemed a perfect fit really."

DBR: What's it been like working with an Italian team?

DH: "Having basically done everything for ourselves for the past 20 years it feels strange – but in a good way. It's a brilliant feeling knowing that you can focus on yourself while somebody else takes care of your bike. The team is laid back so we fit in quite well and with them being Italian the coffee's excellent too."

DBR: What's your schedule for 2013?

BH: "Our budget for 2013 is limited and it's likely that we won't get to race at all the 'Big Seven' hard enduro events this year. We've just done The Tough One and Hell's Gate in Italy. Next on the list is Erzberg which for everybody is the biggest event of the season. After that we'll definitely race the Red Bull Romaniacs and the Extreme XL Lagares in Portugal. Neither of us has competed in the Red Bull Romaniacs before so that's something we're looking forward to. After that we'd love to squeeze in either the Red Bull Sea to Sky in Turkey or the Roof of Africa."

DBR: Erzberg is the next major event on the calendar. Having achieved a podium result there in 2012 are you targeting another top three result?

BH: "I know I've the ability to finish on the podium again but with Erzberg you just never know how the race is going to unfold. Last year the entry list was stacked in talent – at least 10 guys could finish on the podium – so I expect this year will be the same again."

DBR: What's it like working with and competing alongside your brother?

BH: "We've raced together all of our lives and in turn have got a lot of trust. With both of us being on the same bike it's great to bounce ideas off one another about set-up for the races. And obviously on the track we both want to beat each other too. I think trying to beat your brother is one of the most important battles to win."

DH: "Ben and myself have a great relationship which is damn impressive after spending 10 years driving around Europe in a Sprinter van. We work well together but on track we're always trying to beat one another. He knows I'll never give up trying to chase him down which pushes him on as I try to catch up to the little sh*t."

DBR: The popularity of hard enduro has boomed during the last couple of years.

Why do you think that is?

BH: "I think it's something people can relate to. If you've ever ridden an enduro bike then you know how heavy and cumbersome they are to ride over rocks. Anyone can jump on a bike and ride it around a motocross track. They may not be able to ride like the pros but they'll still get around whereas in hard enduro you've got to be heavily skilled to complete the course. Our bikes are almost showroom spec – the same as most hobby riders – so I suppose they can appreciate what we're doing even more."

DH: "I think it's a lot to do with self achievement. Finishing events like Erzberg or Red Bull Romaniacs are impressive feats. And most people can relate to that. Our father came to watch us at the opening round of the British Extreme Enduro Championship in Tong. He's not normally impressed by enduro but loved every minute of the event. He said it was interesting to watch, there was a great spectator atmosphere and it was easy to appreciate the difficulty of the terrain we were riding across. I think that's what most people can relate to most."

DBR: British riders are dominating the world scene – why do you think Great Britain >>>



Dan gets ready to drop in at Hell's Gate

BROPINION

BEN ON DAN...

"In some ways I think Dan's more determined than me. He trains harder and is super fit so it's annoying to see bad luck get in the way of his results. I feel I've got the edge on him at the minute but he's gaining ground. If he can get rid of his bad luck then he's capable of being a top five guy anywhere he goes."

DAN ON BEN...

"I've always felt he's the best lazy rider I've ever met! By that I mean he's naturally talented on a bike, he doesn't have to work hard at it and can put his mind to anything. I believe he's got the ability to be a consistent top three guy. If he was as fit as me he'd be unstoppable."

BEN ON NON-STOP TRIALS...

"It's almost 10 years since I've stepped away from trials and although it's still a big passion of mine I worry about the direction it's headed in. When I look at the world scene I think it's sad to see the entry list dwindling. I believe that the non-stop rule has a big part to play in that – it's dumbing down the sport. World trials, both indoor and out should be a spectacle. It should only be for the elite – the guys that are capable of tackling the big gaps. That's the stuff spectators want to see and be amazed by – that's what sells the sport. I feel the non-stop rule has taken the edge off what guys like Toni Bou and Adam Raga are capable of."

DAN ON JARVIS...

"It's hard to pinpoint exactly why Graham has excelled so well in hard enduro. Obviously he was a naturally talented and gifted trials rider but you need something a little bit more than that to succeed here. He's a tough guy, incredibly determined and motivated to win. He's always done well at events like the Scott Trial and they're similar to what he's doing now. I think his success has come from a combination of being good at those types of races and a massive determination. He's a tough guy to beat."



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A bit of snow poses no problem for Dan!

BROPINION

BEN ON BEING FROM A FAST FAMILY...

"It's kind of unique to have three cousins do so well in our sport. Obviously Dougie Lampkin has been the best out of all of us but both Dan and myself have done okay too. Last year at Erzberg was a brilliant family moment. All three of us finished and Dougie and myself were on the podium. I think our success has come just from having a family background that loves riding bikes. Our parents have always preferred us messing about on bikes than boozing down the pub."

DAN ON SELF SURGERY

"When I was between sports I was getting into riding BMX. It was late in the evening and I'd just had an awesome day out on the trails. I should have called it quits but went for that 'final run'. I landed awkwardly on the last jump and the stunt peg broke my tibia. I was rushed to hospital where the surgeon set it in place. He wasn't happy with the job though and I was in agony. After about five days of going crazy we decided to go back into theatre and fix it. Unfortunately that morning there was a massive emergency and all the nurses got called out. But I was desperate to get fixed so I opted to help. He got me sucking on the gas n' air while I laid back and watched him break it. When he got it set in place he kept my leg steady while I wrapped it up like a chicken wrap with plaster of Paris."



Ben powers through the damp rocks at the Tough One

has become so strong?

BH: "I think we're used to the mud! Almost any time you race at home it's raining or it has just rained. We're used to mud and ruts and just generally surviving. And in hard enduro you need to be mentally strong enough to survive. If you haven't got that instinct to survive at all costs then it's not going to happen for you."

DH: "It's got to be our typical British attitude of never quitting. We're from Yorkshire so we're not allowed to retire – even if we have to push the bike home we're going to finish."

DBR: There is a growing trend of trials riders stepping across to hard enduro. Do you think the current batch of trials riders are looking at what you've achieved and considering following suit?

DH: "I think to a certain degree we are paving a road for others to follow but in a way we've also followed other riders into the sport too. There's a close relationship between trials and hard enduro that's caught peoples attention."

Now guys like Alex Wigg and James Dabill are noticing what we're doing and the level of media attention we're getting. In their spare time they ride enduro so when they finish trials the future could continue to be bright."

DBR: When all is said and done what does the future hold? How many more years do you think you've left in the sport?

BH: "I believe I can be a regular podium guy – I know I'm capable of it. Although I'm 35 I feel like I'm just getting started. Riding bikes is something I love doing and I'm constantly getting better at hard enduro. So far I've managed to dodge working a real 9-5 job so hopefully I can get a few more years out of it."

DH: "I've just turned 38 but I'm younger than Jarvis so there's still hope. Personally, I want to keep going as long as I can until I stop enjoying it. I'd love to race Erzberg with my eldest son but he's only seven. Maybe in 10 years time I'll still be at it. But right now I'm just loving every minute."

GOLD DIGGER!

IF MEDALS WERE AWARDED FOR TRACK DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION IT WOULD BE RICH WINKLER WHO WAS STOOD ON THE TOP STEP OF THE PODIUM...

Words by Sam Hobson Photos by Ray Archer and Nuno Laranjeira

As the founder of Dirt Wurx Rich Winkler is the guy responsible for designing and then building the best indoor race tracks on this planet. And as well as leading the team that exclusively sculpts the AMA Supercross circuits for the Stateside series promoter Feld Motorsports, Rich and his team have also been busy in the UK shoehorning feisty four-lane circuits into UK arenas for the inaugural Arenacross championship n'all. We hooked up with Rich in Liverpool to find out more about what it is he does and how building a track in London is different to building a track in Los Angeles...

DBR: When you have multiple projects going off at the same time – like the AMA Supercross and the UK Arenacross series – how do you decide where you should be?

RW: "Right now we have more than that because we have monster truck events going on in the States as well so I just try and split my time up the best I can. I did the first four AMA rounds and now these last two Arenacross events – I kinda just divide my time up like that."

DBR: And what do you do during the summer when it's all outdoor races?

RW: "Well we don't have much to do with the outdoor season, the tracks are mostly privately owned and they look after the tracks themselves. We do some practice tracks and public parks – things like that."

DBR: What's the strangest project you've ever worked on?

RW: "Charlie's Angels! We did the track for the Charlie's Angels movie and that was pretty weird. We were on

the location for six weeks and there ended up being seven minutes of the film devoted to the Coal Bowl segment of the movie!"

DBR: How do you find working in the small spaces you have with the UK Arenacross series?

RW: "The venues are very similar to Arenacross in the US and we did the US Open at the MGM so we're used to working in these kind of spaces. The biggest challenge over here isn't space – it's the dirt. It's always so wet!"

DBR: On the subject of dirt do you have any control over what you use? How does that work?

RW: "Every time I've been here it's either been soaking wet or really sandy. It's very, very difficult to keep the dirt compact. In the States when events repeat from year to year we save the dirt from one year to the next so we have control over it. Here, we were still looking at dirt sources on the Thursday before the race."

DBR: How far in advance do you draw up designs for these tracks?

RW: "We met with Matt and Steve in October and once we knew we had a deal we started the track designs right away."

DBR: What kind of things do you bear in mind when designing a track for the UK?

RW: "In this case we had to pay attention for leaving room in the centre for the freestyle. Originally the freestyle landing ramp was going to be incorporated as part of the track which would have made it a lot easier. It was a little tough to fit it all in but we got there. If the dirt is always going to be this soft then I think we will have to

look at doing a lot more big round things like step-ups. Even the rhythm sections are so soft. It's almost like you need to think of totally new sections which aren't affected by the moisture."

DBR: Does it cause any problems having to allow for 65cc racers as well as the pro guys?

RW: "I don't think so. You have to be conscious that they're there but they don't really jump and they're riding everything so as long as the track maintenance is timed correctly and the ruts aren't too bad there's no problem."

DBR: Have you every built anything where you think someone's gonna get hurt on or something you feel is a bit too crazy?

RW: "Umm yeah! Usually we recognise if something is gonna be sketchy and change it ahead of time. The scariest thing at AMA Supercross is when we've built something really standard like a rhythm section that we've built hundreds of times. The guys will see some way to jump four instead of the two or three that we planned. This year we looked at the designs ahead of time and tried to identify the places where we thought that was going to happen. It's tough though!"

DBR: When you design tracks for the UK do you take into account the fact that UK riders don't get the chance to ride supercross very much?

RW: "You know what, when it was Future West we did because they had a lot of amateur classes at the event. These guys now, their skills are hugely improved from a few years ago. You have to tone it down a little because the dirt is so soft but I don't think you have to alter the track for the riders anymore."





DBR: How do you feel when you get negative feedback on a track you have designed?

RW: "As long as it's constructive and ahead of time then I don't mind. A lot of riders in the US we get along with really well and they will come to us on the Friday to say something isn't working well. We're not in love with those jumps you know and sometimes we make mistakes! What I don't like is when a guy doesn't say anything all day and then gets on the podium and moans that the track was one line or something. That doesn't do anybody any good – we can't fix it and now it's out on the internet or in a magazine or something."

DBR: How often do you find time to ride?

RW: "I still ride quite a bit but I don't race as much anymore. I've got a Suzuki 250 and a couple of enduro bikes. Recently I got a restored Maico and I've been doing some twinshock races so it's been fun!"

DBR: Do you have your own track?

RW: "Yeah we have a little track at our house."

DBR: How often do you change that up?

RW: "We change it around direction wise a couple of times a year but that's about it!"

DBR: Is it a case of you neglect your own track after spending all your time building everyone else's?

RW: "Yeah for sure – mine looks like a quarry!"

DBR: But is this what you love doing? If you had enough money would you stop building tracks?

RW: "God no! I've been riding since I was 11 or 12 years old. Then I was a pro rider for three years and since that I had a succession of jobs before Dirt Wurx started 23 years ago. I mean, who could ask for more than that. Working doing something you've loved since you were 11 or 12 years old! Not to say I don't get aggravated with the nonsense here and there but you could get that working in a shoe store!"

DBR: So what's your favourite project you have worked on?

RW: "I really like working in the baseball shape stadiums – they are really wide and offer up a lot of freedom. My favourite for absolute fun would have to be the big outdoor tracks where you just have a piece of terrain and you're just kinda sculpting something into that. You're kind of just imagining yourself riding it so that's real fun."

DBR: Do you have much in the pipeline? Obviously the Monster Cup is coming up so when do you start thinking about that?

RW: "Ah yeah – that kinda slipped my mind! That's a fun one because it's really different with the section up in the stands and the joker lap."

DBR: Who comes up with the ideas like the joker lap?

RW: "That was actually Jeremy McGrath's idea about two years ago – I guess they do it in some kind of truck racing that he's involved in. I'd never seen it but it sounded kinda cool. Ricky Carmichael and a bunch of us get together in the summer and discuss some ideas. Everybody liked it so we decided to run with it. It's funny



Rich's work is amazing



Moist dirt can be troublesome



because most of the riders believe that the best thing to do was wait until the end but when you think about it the guys that it paid off for were the ones that did it early."

DBR: So are you working on anything at the moment – maybe some top

secret project you want to share with us?

RW: "Nah not yet, this first eight or nine weeks we're so busy. Me and Norm, we haven't been home for more than three days since Christmas and so far it's been a straight seven weeks."

DBR: How do you find being on the road all the time?

RW: "That's the one bad part. We're both taking a break and not going to Dallas so we're going to take a break and hit it again after Dallas."

DBR: As far as the Arenacross series is concerned which has been your favourite track?

RW: "I've only been here for the last two but



The man himself – Rich Winkler

I heard Belfast was really good.”

DBR: How much does an arena full of dirt cost exactly?

RW: “Ahh, I dunno. It’s expensive here to what we pay in the US. Usually we can store it somewhere in or around the stadium so we only pay to shift it back and forth – it’s not like we have to buy it new each time. These guys have to buy it so that’s gotta be expensive.”

DBR: You spend a lot of time at the US races. Who’s your favourite rider there?

RW: “Friendship wise, I’m probably tightest with Kevin Windham. This year just as a fan I’m getting a kick out of watching Justin Barcia and Canard. Barcia just riders so hard and Canard’s story is such a great one that he can come back and ride like that. I’m shocked to see Millsaps still on top with all those guys – that’s such a surprise! He’s riding good too and it’s not like he’s getting lucky! He’s always been super fast but he’s not been consistent. Now he’s always

there picking up points. It’s like when you hear people get down on Dungey because he doesn’t win a lot of races but still wins the championship but that’s what it means to be the champ!”

DBR: On the subject of Windham do you have a lot of input into his big opening show jumps?

RW: “They’re super fun! Every week he looks at the drawings ahead of time and then he’s at the track on Thursday. We do have to shape up some of the kickers where people can’t see sometimes. The one big one he did this year was 100ft and last year was 115ft – that was across three lanes and he had to hop from bowl to bowl. It was nuts!”

DBR: In your opinion how can E22 Sports improve the Arenacross series for 2014?

RW: “There are two things. Obviously for this kind of racing the quality of dirt is critical. If you’re going to be serious and have a serious series then you have to start thinking about specifying a particular kind of dirt instead of

taking whatever it is you can get.

“Then as it gets more serious and the tracks get more technical you gotta look at having more of the foam safety blocks – Tuff Blocks. We use a similar product but with 30lb of weight on the bottom. It’s not a big deal while everything is kind of mellow and muddy but once you get hard dirt and the tracks get faster you have to look at having more and having them weighted properly.

“The big one is the dirt though. If they could find a dirt guy who understood the need then that would be such a big improvement. Most of the work on the track we do during the night is just cosmetic – we’re just fluffing loose dirt back into place so it has to be right from the off.”

DBR: How have you found working with the Arenacross team?

RW: “Matt I like, I don’t know him too well but he seems like a good guy and his heart is in it. Our direct supervisor is Steve Price. He’s the best! He’s ex-military and everything is on schedule and it’s really good! He’s a worker!”

FIGHT TO THE DEATH!

ANDRE MALHERBE AND BAD BRAD LACKEY BATTLE IT OUT TO THE BITTER END TO SEE WHO'LL BE CROWNED 1980 500CC WORLD CHAMPION...

Words and photos by Jack Burnicle

Since the turn of the century our premier motocross grand prix series has endured a decade of virtual domination, first in the super-smooth hands of Stefan Everts and more recently the super spectacular Tony Cairoli...

Great though these guys are to watch nothing ever matches those years of bitter internecine rivalry where a championship is fought to a frantic finale, fortunes waxing and waning round by round. The late seventies saw Heikki Mikkola and in 1979 Graham Noyce rule the 500 grand prix roost, the latter securing Honda's first MX crown before suffering early-season injuries in 1980.

This left his team-mate Andre Malherbe, a suave, cool Belgian, head-to-head with bearded American motormouth Brad Lackey, riding the revolutionary 'Uni-Trak' Kawasaki KX500 he'd debuted in 1979. Malherbe's factory Honda now boasted its own monoshock rear suspension system and he put it to good use, doing the double in Switzerland's opening round. Lackey responded strongly, winning both motos at Sittendorf, in Austria to take a championship lead he still narrowly held after Malherbe doubled up yet again, round the fantastic chalk slopes of Gaillefontaine, in France.

Class rookie Hakan Carlqvist (Yamaha) beat them both in Sweden, with Lackey edging out Malherbe for second place but Andre again beat Brad at Ruskeasanta in Finland a week later and nudged into a one-point title lead! Their increasingly bitter rivalry – they really didn't care for one another! – moved on to Italy where Andre went 2-1 but Brad only twice scraped into the top six. And though sand maestro Andre Vromans (Yamaha) won both motos in Valkenswaard Malherbe salvaged respectable points while Lackey was cruelly halted by an engine seizure while leading race one.

Carlsbad Raceway, in his native California, went better for Brad. Sixth in race one and though he crashed out of the second moto Andre failed to score all day. Then after narrowly losing the overall verdict to Malherbe in Canada the Californian twice finished second at a sticky, treacherous Gaildorf where Malherbe suffered a nightmare and one solitary eighth place which back then earned him a paltry three points. Lackey had retaken the championship lead by one!

Two rounds left and the great citadel of Namur beckoned. But Brad never cared for this historic

masterpiece. In baking heat he holed out and then crumbled in race one. Malherbe's veteran team-mate Roger De Coster rode shotgun for his fellow Belgian as they attacked Lackey, demoting him to third place on lap five after a ferocious three-way fight.

When the heavens opened and a mighty thunderstorm left the Meuse valley awash Malherbe once more beat Brad and Carlqvist as they squelched heroically through race two, Andre's drenched, anxious American mechanic Alan Hahn greeting his man with enormous relief at the sodden finishing line. Malherbe had suddenly prised open a nine-point lead with one round left...

We congregated across the border a week later for the 'Grand Prix du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg' beneath an expectant buzz of excitement and anticipation. Ettelbruck was, like Namur, an amazing venue I'd heard much about but never seen. It had hosted the final round of the 500cc championship since the series began in 1957 – and it didn't disappoint!

Set in scenic woodland it boasted a lap time of more than three minutes – a river crossing over slippery wooden sleepers; the vertiginous blast up the 'Montee du Coq' followed instantly by an even steeper launch back down running along a cart track before dropping sharply down the 'Descente Cuvete' and weaving out into lush, undulating, adverse-cambered meadowlands and then a couple of road crossings over 'Chemin du Peplen' before diving beneath the same road under a narrow bridge, sharp right and back across the river! And it was fast. "I've never felt the throttle against the stop so often for so long," grinned Montesa-mounted 'Cheshire Charger' Pete Mathia.

Come Sunday morning – August 10 – the whole place was heaving. Following timed practice at 10.30 De Coster – who had won here in 1975 – took pole position from Lackey and Carlqvist while Malherbe languished eighth, fully four seconds off his team-mate's pace.

Course marking featured long stretches of flimsy trackside tape that allowed enthusiastic spectators to encroach virtually on to the racing line. In fact Belgian fans, noted amused Irish teenager Laurence Spence, would push forward to block your chosen path then withdraw and allow their favoured riders through! I still remember that simmering hum of expectation ringing in my ears as we photographers gathered round the first corner...

>>

HUNTED DOWN BY HONDA DUO MALHERBE AND DE COSTER, LACKEY LOST HIS TITLE LEAD AT NAMUR IN 1980!



Next time he went he was armed with his mum's Kodak Brownie camera.
After art college he mixed life as a graphic designer, magazine art director, photographer and part-time art college tutor with motocross and photo-journalism.
Now he's a commentator, painting pictures with words. He never did get a proper job...

Jack Burnick is the godfather (our words, not his) of British MX journalism. Born in Billingham, County Durham, to Bolla and nutty (his words, not ours) musical genius Stan Burnick, Jack was mad about cars and motor racing as a kid.
At sweet 16 he got a motorbike, rode it to a local 'scramble' and was instantly, hopelessly hooked.

DESCRIPTION SIGNALEMENT

| | | | |
|----------------------|------------------|-------|-------|
| Beater | Titulaire | ★Wife | Femme |
| Occupation | GRAPHIC DESIGNER | | |
| Place of birth | BILHAM | | |
| Date of birth | 9/2/47 | | |
| Country of Residence | ENGLAND | | |

Jack Burnick

Usual signature of beater

Signature du titulaire

Wife's signature of life

Signature de la femme

05.3373159

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LACKEY CHARGES OUT
INTO THE LUXEMBOURG
COUNTRYSIDE,
DESPERATE TO NAIL
MALHERBE!



BRAD LACKEY LAUNCHES
AN EARLY ASSAULT
ON ANDRE MALHERBE
AT GAILDONF'S 1980
GERMAN 500CC



1980 LUXEMBOURG 500CC
+ MALHERBE (3) CLIPS
ARCH-RIVAL LACKEY

INTO THE CROWD IN
THE FIRST TURN OF RACE ONE

Ivan van den Broeck (Maico) briefly headed De Coster and Andre Vromans (Yamaha) as the field braked hard off the wide, flat starting straight into that congested left-hand hairpin where the crowd was packed against a low wire fence. Lackey looped wide but mid-corner he and Malherbe – who else! – clashed, the collision firing Brad hard right into the fence and startled fans. Lackey leapt off the Kawasaki, hauled it back out and, already stone last, took off in anguished pursuit. British champ Geoff Mayes (Maico) had also fallen and collected Welshman Andy Robertson (Yamaha) so Brad had only 30-odd rivals to pass!

Within four searing laps the American had

barged through to 10th but at the front De Coster and Vromans were long gone, ahead of a lively scrap involving van den Broeck, Carlqvist and Malherbe. Half an hour in Malherbe had settled that score in third and left 'Carla' to fend off a fevered Lackey, who ducked his head against a hail of stones as they scorched up the 'Montee du Coq' for the last time.

But a skirmish with a straw bale cost Brad any chance of that precious extra place and he'd slipped four points further adrift of Malherbe. The Belgian explained their crucial coming together with a phlegmatic shrug of the shoulders. "Brad was outside and came across me, so we touched."

A pensive Lackey, clad typically in a white straw Stetson, awaited race two in the parc ferme pondering his tactics. This time he tailed De Coster into the first corner where Jean Jacques Bruno (Suzuki) felled Mathia and the unlucky Robertson. Brad then hit the front before 34 year old Roger, crowning his career in style, scythed past under braking into the third lap and abandoned the American to the unsubtle attentions of Malherbe and Carlqvist.

Things turned ugly – fists were waved, brakes checked and Carla, sensibly, broke clear. "It wasn't very pleasant what they were doing to each other out there," reported the shocked Swede later. The duel of death lasted until, after 30 enthralling minutes, Lackey hit a tree (rather than Malherbe!) and faded downfield to 10th place behind Mayes and Spence, the back end of his KX500 looking distinctly second-hand. Up ahead, Andre Malherbe crossed the finishing line into a wall of fans, blinded by a plume of champagne, to be crowned 1980 500cc world champion!

Later, Lackey reflected on his defeat with commendable philosophy. "Everyone in the team has worked hard," he said. "We all did our best and in the end it wasn't quite good enough. You can always say 'if I hadn't crashed at Carlsbad things might have been different', or whatever, but in the end it was a race out their today and Andre won."



CRUNCH TIME!

OUR KTM 350 SX-F MAGAZINE MACHINE GOES CHASING AN ARENACROSS CHAMPIONSHIP WITH LITTLE TOMMY CHURCH ON BOARD...

WORDS BY GEOFF WALKER PHOTOS BY NUNO LARANJEIRA AND SUTTY

Myself and the SuttDawg have been taking stock magazine test bikes and racing them in many places on planet earth for many years now. For our latest project we took a stock KTM 350 SX-F, gave it a wee tweak and ran it in the Arenacross UK series in the hands of Mr Tom Church and the SR75 World Team powered by Molson. The bike, rider and series went very well and maybe a small amount of luck would have seen the mag machine feature on the podium more than once.

The plan was to produce the perfect Arenacross bike for racing here in the UK and to use easily reachable and kinda affordable parts to make a pro package to go after holeshots and race wins.

Basically I took the 350, tore it down and rebuilt it on the chassis side of things. The 2013 350 KTM produces around six horsepower more than the '12 and the more importantly the torque figure is bumped up to get the power to the

ground in a friendly way. To help that power get to the ground we used – what I believe to be – the best parts available from around the globe.

In my mind the suspension is the most important part of the package. Fox Racing Shox are producing high quality units and parts from their base in Northern California and the last few years has proved to be successful for them with riders using their products in AMA Supercross as well as World MX.

The Podium RC3 shock was our choice and I worked with Fox Shox UK supremos Mojo Suspension to develop and produce the best fork and shock combo we possibly could. Chris Porter and Mojo Moto Paul worked tirelessly with me in the search for perfection. We didn't have much test time due to the weather here but we worked from a base Arenacross USA setting and developed the feel from there – making small changes when required. The Fox Shock and Fox Shox modified WP forks helped both our riders find a good feel for each track. >>

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The boys run 1-2 in a Liverpool heat race

Talon engineering took care of our wheel needs with their top of the range, carbon hub units in black/orange. The wheels took a lot of punishment during the series and never creaked and remained true, strong and perfectly round when the final flag fell.

Pirelli MT32 tyres wrapped the Talon wheels and provided the grip for the numerous team holeshots. We ran Stan's No Tubes liquid in the tubes to stop any chance of a DNF due to flats. As well as Talon and Pirelli our friends at Renthall also offered a fairly good purchase deal so I also bought these products. A 51 tooth rear sprocket ran on the mag machine and some Fatbars fitted with half-waffle grips.

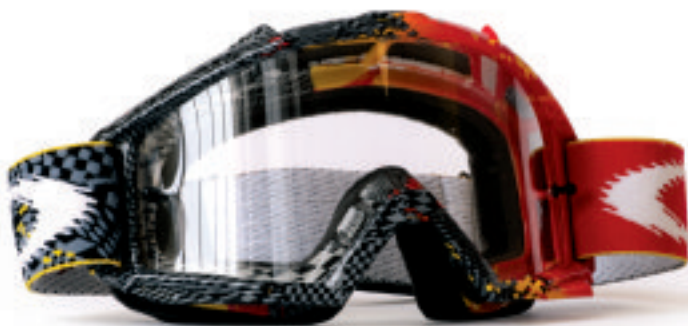
A KTM power parts start device was the final piece on the chassis package and what a beauty of a collection of hard parts it was.

The motor and power department was simple for me... We have used FMF pipes a few times on our long haul machines with great success so through Mr David Knight, Donny 'Lil D' Emler hooked us up with some Factory 4.1 titanium exhaust systems to take care of power delivery. These things are works of art and I think I will hang one up in my living room wall when we are done with it...

The fuel injection system was left to do its business in stock form and the only other modification we ran were the super slick Samco Silicone hose kits which included their own Samco super strong clip kits. The hoses help coolant flow better and therefore help the motor run cooler in the heat of indoor battle.

Would I say I was happy with our package? Very much so. We ran very close to a stock bike and took plenty of holeshots as a team on both our bikes (TC had four holeshots from his first four races during rounds one and two) as well as finishing as the number one team overall in the championship.

What an experience and what a bike! Thanks to everyone involved in the project...



OAKLEY

PROVEN MX AND MAYHEM GOGGLES

Oakley have always been at the very forefront of eyewear and as well as being the best out there optically I always take comfort in the fact that even a shotgun can't blast the lens out. Ideal if you get caught up in an armed robbery because although the rest of your face will look like a welder's bench for the rest of your days at least your eyes will be in mint condition.

The Proven MX is the middle of the range goggle from Oakley and costs £40 although the signature 'Ricky Carmichael' model we have here is £50 – the extra tenner getting you some bling for your buck with a signature ginger ninja strap wrap and some trick graphics on the frame. If you're like me and it's all about looking cool in the car park then it's a no brainer.

I've been running these goggles for a while now and the thing that always stands out with Oakley – and you might say is what you pay for – is the quality. Triple foam soaking up any sweat before they get to drop on to the inside of the lens, a Lexan lens that won't scratch giving you that 'foggy' vision after one wipe down and

the strap's great too and with a good firm stretch you can do it up tight to stop your ill fitting lid dropping over your eyes – just like I do!

Good vision all round, comfortable and cool looking these goggles are probably all you need.

Of course though that's never enough and if you're looking for some high end vision then the Mayhem might be what you're looking for – the base model coming in at £65 with a spare dark lens and a packet of tear offs.

The model we have here has been revved right up by a Troy Lee Designs collaboration – the extra 10 pounds meaning you'll officially be pimp even when casually hanging these over the bars of your parked up bike at the back of your van.

Of course they have all the features of the above but with a wider lens which gives improved peripheral vision – a must if you weave up sandy straights as much as I do. The nose guard looks factory and is removable if it rubs on your lid. The strap is trick with

rubber strips on the inside holding it in place.

For me it's the way the strap attaches to the frame that makes this goggle better with the rigid O-Matter outriggers definitely making the goggle more comfortable to wear – they just seem to fit even better.

For me the other feature I like is the laminate tear off system that makes looking through seven tear offs like looking through one normal one – that means you can stack 21 or more on with no deterioration in your viewing pleasure. When you pull one – and I like to think of myself whipped up over a 90 foot triple Stewart style although the harsh reality though is I'm panting like a dog grabbing big hands of whiskey throttle as I one handedly hit square edge bumps coming out of the slowest turn I can find – you do get a full field of vision instead of just the strip offered by a roll off system.

Laminates ain't cheap though or everyone's cup of tea so with Smith's patent now well and truly run out Oakley already have their very own roll off system in the pipeline. Watch this space.



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There used to be a time when the stock handlebars that came on new bikes were bloody terrible – they were made out of steel, vibrated like billio and bent very easily n'all.

Throughout the years stock handlebars have got much better and many bikes now come from the factory fitted with aluminium oversize bars as standard. If you're one of the unlucky ones though and fancy an upgrade it's no hard job but will still steal an hour of your life.

To accommodate larger diameter bars you will need to change your clamps. Top

clamps have two main styles – fixed mounts or rubber mounts. Neither is a problem as the modification is easy enough for each style. For fixed mount models risers are about the best option and won't make too much of a hole in your wedge – just as well really as decent bars will definitely empty your wallet but they are a valuable upgrade. If you have rubber mounts, get a new set of purpose made stems which will replace the original mounts with ease. Risers are only safe where the mount is integral to the top clamp.



07 Position the bars to your own preference – some models have markings on them to help with this process. Those with offset clamps need to decide at this point if they favour the forward or backward position.



08 Once the bars are tight now is the time to tighten the clamp nuts. The bars will make the bike rigid enough to hold everything in position and give you something to hold onto as you tighten them up. Fit split pins if your replacement uses them.

BAR BRAWL!

DR DIRT TAKES YOU THROUGH POPPING ON A PAIR OF OVERSIZE HANDLEBARS...

Words by **ROBIN BAYMAN** photos by **ANDREW WALCH**



01 With the bike on a steady stand undo all the controls and removable items – the brake perch, the clutch perch, hot start, kill button, bar pad etc. For now just slacken the throttle body – we're gonna slide that off later.



02 Beneath the top clamp there are nuts that hold the bar mounts tight. These need slackening whilst the bars are still on the bike. Be warned that there isn't much space under there and a decent ring spanner is the way forward.



03 Undo the bars and completely remove them. Now is the time to slide the throttle tube off the bars – the cables and other controls can hang safely for a spell. The mounts can be completely removed now.



04 If the bike has been upright for most of its life the rubbers should be in good condition but if they show any sign of collapse they will need replacing. A good looking at is the only real way of telling their condition.



05 Slip the new bar mounts into position, preferably dry as grease will only make them easier to twist if you fall. Water is the best lubricant if everything is a bit stiff. Twist the new nuts onto the stems now but don't worry about trying to get them tight yet.



06 As the new bars are offered to the bike slip the throttle tube on at this point. That's the voice of bitter experience coming through!



09 Make sure everything aligns with your front wheel. Sometimes slackening everything off is required to straighten it all out.



10 Secure your new grips. I prefer a squirt of brake cleaner to glue – simply twist and knock the new grip home in a single action then after an hour, wire the grip.



11 The ends on fatter bars are still the same as standard bars making all standard controls fit as normal. Route the cables as they were intended, double check everything is tight and you are good to go.

RIDE TIME!

THE TIME HAS COME TO START RIDING AGAIN BUT IT'S
NO USE JUST GOING OUT AND POUNDING LAPS...

WORDS BY ED BRADLEY

For preparation around the winter months we've focused on creating a vision away from the bike. If you've invested some time in yourself then it's been a good call because the weather has been bobbins and has only just started to turn in the last few weeks.

So, now the wheels are turning what kind of riding are you doing? Remember that you will still be racing in October – seven months down the line! What if your goal – your championship position – goes down to the wire, to the final race of the season? What kind of condition do you want to be in then? My guess is that you want to take the one thing you've been working towards all year, grab it by the horns, strangle the competition and rise as the victor.

The strategy you are using for the season will influence your MX training at this time of year. One method that I like is spending time in the early months getting a good feeling on the bike and conditioning yourself so that you can ride strong for your full race distance – plus a lap extra – as many times as you need to in a day. Putting the effort into motos now will mean that, as you get stuck into your racing, you can reduce the number of hours you ride during the week and keep yourself fresh as a button for the weekend ahead.

Another thing to bear in mind with riding at this time of year is that track conditions are often a little dodgy. If you are at an open-practice track (like DMP) then there is a good chance its going to be busy so doing speed-work in these kind of conditions could be a little counterproductive. Misreading the track and crashing is no good for anyone and flying past riders on your limit is a risky business. However, predicting what the riders around you are going to do is a very good skill to develop indeed!

Self-discipline is also required at this time of year because there is always someone who is going to want to show off how fast they are by passing you in any way they can or hanging on to the back of you because you are their target. It's times like this that make it so important to have a clear vision in your mind of what you want to achieve. Without your own training objectives there is a good chance that you'll bite and chase after or race ahead of the rider and completely forget the purpose of your training session. When you know exactly what you are aiming for what you want to achieve, it is easy to maintain your focus on the job in hand and let others get on with their aimless riding.

If you haven't set a racing goal and are struggling with concentration or motivation during motos then here are a couple of things you can do to help. They involve a helper, stopwatch and a pit board. Back in the year 19cough... cough... cough... cough, former British champion Paul Cooper and myself were lucky enough to be taken out to practise by Dave Thorpe's father, Keith, who introduced this strategy to us and I still use it today!

First of all, go out and do your warm up. Check your bike is working fine and get your lines dialled in, finishing with some fast laps. Record these lap times and use your fastest time from this session. Next, draw an arrow on the pit board. Your helper is to record your lap times and according to these, show you the arrow on the pit board in one of three positions. If your lap times are within two seconds of your fastest warm up time then the arrow stays horizontal. If your lap time is faster than your warm up time, then the arrow will be shown pointing downwards and if you are slower than the two second buffer, then the arrow will be shown pointing upwards. Of course, the arrows can go whichever way round is easiest for you to remember!

In the training session your job is to keep the arrow pointing horizontally or downwards. Go too fast at the beginning of the session and you will struggle to maintain your speed, so you need to find a good race pace throughout the moto. To get the most out of these sessions, it is best to record how often you kept within two seconds, how many times you went faster than your warm up time and how many times you were slower.

With this information you can measure how your bike fitness is improving, by comparing your deviation (the number of seconds between your fastest and slowest lap time) over a period of weeks or months. If you own an iPhone and want to be really slick you can download the MX Coach app and use the fitness test which records the deviation times and stores the results in the app for later comparisons.

I've had parents ask 'what can I do to motivate Johnny? He just goes out in his sessions and rides round and round without putting any effort in to his riding... it drives me mad. What can I do?' When I ask what the target you set was before he went out the answer is often, 'well I just told him to go fast!'. How will you know if you were fast? If you have a clear target – to keep your lap times within two seconds – then you have to keep going, keep pushing to the end of the moto and then come back in and see how you got on. It's fun and you are on your own little journey. Also, you will be able to let the wannabes go blasting past – if they can – and stay focused on what you are doing!

By setting a purpose each time you go onto the track you will stay on your bike more and improve your concentration because you have something to aim for. Over time you will improve your bike fitness. To finish off, remember this – practice makes perfect, as long as you practice perfectly!



FRAMED!

THE FLEET GETS A CLASSY CHASSIS MAKEOVER...

Words by **Robin Bayman** Photos by **Andrew Walch**

The aluminium framed KX-F has disrupted the synchronised rebuilding of the RPM fleet and reinforces the idea that aluminium framed bikes have an advantage when recovering any project.

While a couple of late nights, a few grazed knuckles and not much sweat in the freezing workshop nudge all three a bit closer to running order, the KTM and YZ still live in boxes and self-sealing bags as they wait for their frames to be coated.

The KTM motor is built and ready to go yet all the little components look like they will never fit back on the bike. The YZ motor just needs a spare hour to rebuild it but what is the point at this stage? We also took time away from the project for Christmas and concentrated on stripping the frames ready for their new coating as this preparation reflects heavily on the finished item.

The KX-F has progressed to rolling form

and runs, recovered to its like-new spec with more shiny parts than a jeweller's window in the January sales. We thought we could describe the KX-F as an almost new 2008 KX250F just waiting for its finishing touches – graphics, for example. However, with so much of the bike being genuinely new and looking shiny and glamorous it became visually obvious that the wheels were original. Slight signs of wear and tear on the rims stuck out like sore thumbs, letting the whole bike down.

Although the wheels are remarkably good for their age, the two per cent rule kicked in. For those unfamiliar with the two per cent rule it applies to just about any scenario where people look at an object or place. While 98 per cent might look great the first comments from observers would focus on the tiny negative detail which makes up the other two per cent. 'If it were not for the rims, you would not believe the bike had been ridden' – that's what people

would remember or talk about between themselves. Just two per cent influences everything in spite of the fact that the remaining 98 per cent is made up of either new or fully-serviceable existing parts.

As the KX-F rims are damaging our visual appeal, replacement or recovery are the only options. New rims and spokes on the original hubs would be the most economical answer and as expected, new seals, bearings, tyres, tubes and sprockets are essential for a bike listing so many new parts. Check out the list – new cylinder head, cams, cam chain, cam bearings, valves, valve springs, valve seals, piston, rings, main bearings, Wiseco crank, full plastics, kickstart, Twinwall bars, bar clamps, Renthal flexible levers, all cables, suspension linkage bearings, main bearings, wheel bearings, chain, sprockets, footrests, decals, tyres, tubes, chain guide, chain rollers, oil and air filters.

Graphics are being designed by our arty



Rob delves deep into the Project RPM bran tub

college pal to fit to the new plastics and just about any nut or bolt that looked like a spanner may have come within a foot of it is being replaced for new. Why hold back there? Let's have a new set of rims to complete what we expect to be the newest 2008 KX250F this side of Saturn and if yours is better we don't even care! So much work has gone into this bike but we are not even considering drafting out a balance sheet for it because if we gave up we would be heart-broken as well as skint.

Turning back to the KTM and YZ chassis – the coated steel frames did look past their use by dates. For many older stock bikes, regular

riding keeps those worn-to-bare-metal areas looking healthy as fresh surface rust is repeatedly polished away with each lap churned. However, the KTM has been leant against a garage wall for the past four years. The ingrained rust made the frame look rather dated and tatty, albeit acceptable for a nine year old used bike. The KTM was never put out to graze as it has not had a hard life – mainly due to my own lack of riding aggression and my pride in its presentation when it was out on the race circuits.

The quandary we had was whether to stay with the gold on the KTM frame and blue on the YZ or go for low-maintenance black on



WHO IS ROB BAYMAN?

Spannerman to Neil Prince, Jon Barfoot and Steve McMillan in Brit MX and GPs. International support to HRC developer Takayuki Miyouchi and US SX star Ricky Ryan. DBR tester and contributor since '97.



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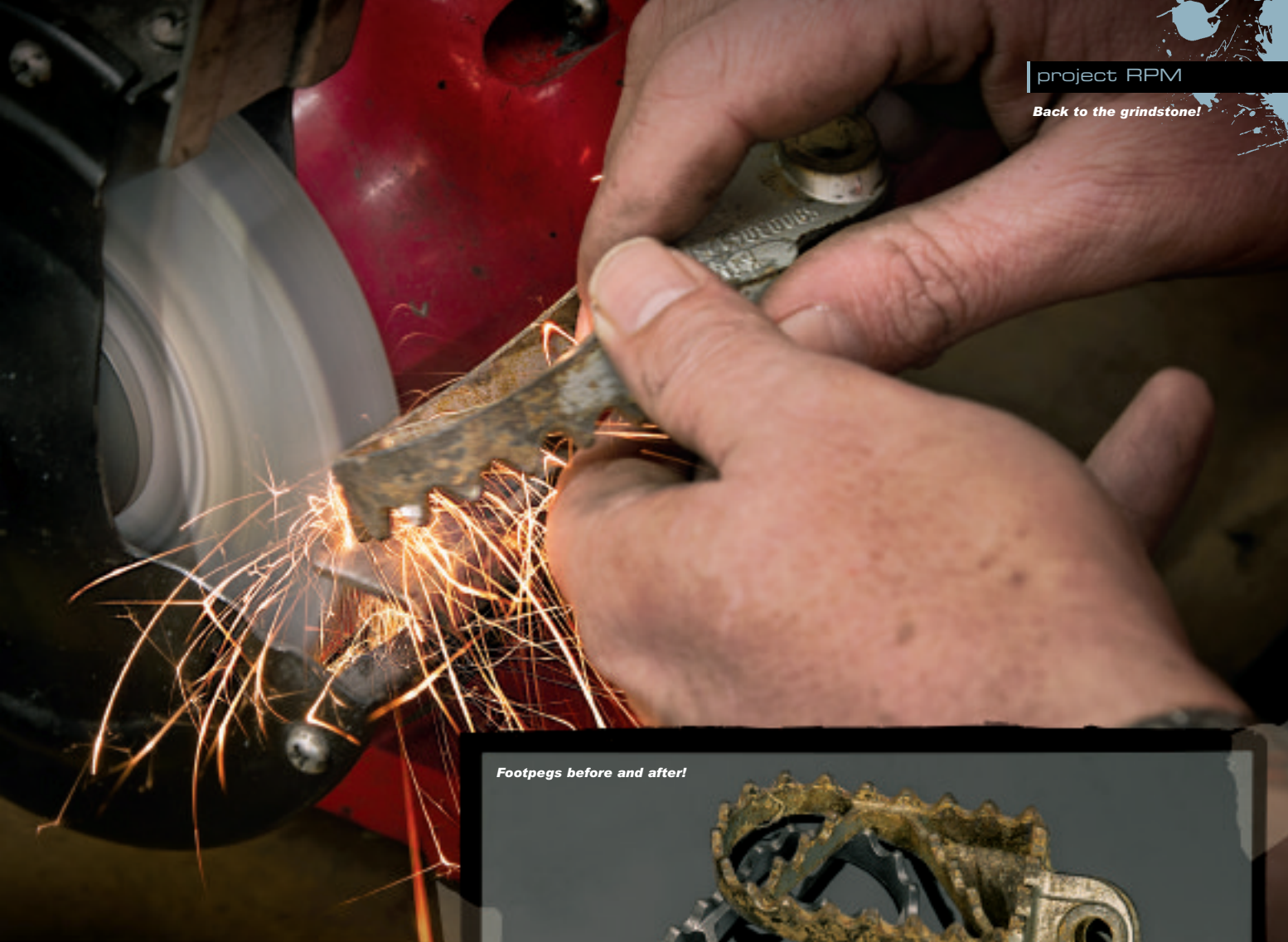
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both. No colour change would add any value to the aged KTM but a fresh coat would make them both look a little more presentable. Before the frames headed for their new coats we checked over them carefully for cracks or structural damage, checking welds for fractures and any damaged threads. Removing the head bearings from their casings was the toughest part and even that is pretty easy. The KTM headset bearing outer races were immaculate, probably due to frequent cleaning and greasing. The standard seals on genuine KTM head bearings are superior in quality to their competitively priced aftermarket options and I had stuck with the genuine option throughout the bike's riding life.

If the footrest hangers had been baggy, this would have been the time to get creative with the welder and build up any worn areas but again the hangers and footrests were in remarkable condition. Just a little dressing of the sharp edges and two or three minutes in the blasting cabinet removed any light rusting and I felt they were as good as ever.

For anyone recovering their own bikes and not considering coating, OEM colour match paint can be bought in aerosol cans but we felt that within 10 minutes of the first outing we would be back to square one. The options we were left with were powder coating or electroplating. Electroplating chrome or nickel is never a good idea as the process is so costly and cannot be touched up with an artist's brush. Plus, the process seems to make the frame metal brittle and attract fractures and there seems to be a pattern with the better quality metal being more prone to cracking on the welds. Many disagree with this but having had a couple of frames nickel coated and each cracked we felt we should stick to polymer coating.

Either way the requirement to remove anything not welded into the frame is standard procedure – the blasting medium will remove all traces of the original coating and has the additional bonus of providing a key for the replacement coating to adhere to. The lesser favoured option of over-coating the original paint is simply bad practice as the new coating merely wraps around the metal like an envelope of paint. The result is that it drops off like egg shells in big, brittle flakes.

Cheque books at the ready again! Each frame will cost £100 for coating with new head and swing-arm bearings chasing a similar amount again. It seems sinful, when completely competitive bikes frequently change hands for less than £1000 but bear in mind that a bike costing £1000 often has a mysterious history or needs just about everything replaced.

We will be frank – corners will have had to be cut with the KTM rather than face the cost of bringing the KX-F back to full glory. What can be serviced will be serviced and what needs replacing will be replaced – although more than

a handful of new bits will be added for cosmetic changes such as plastics and decals. We already have those – a complete new Polisport plastic set, MXM Decals and Renthal everything on the steering mechanism and running gear – even the disc pads and new tyres.

It must be remembered, though, that the KTM is only worth £12-1500 even when recovered to race spec and showing off its new boots and panties – black, gold or even some jazzy pearlescent coating – it remains an old bike but it will be a perfectly competitive club-racer's bike as will the YZ85.

Our next update will be about rebuilding, rather than pulling apart, all three bikes, which will hopefully align with the return of better weather to go racing again, so we can compare our results to those of the riders of newer machines. There's also the possibility of a dyno run to set them up and a few modifications – like a cable-operated hot start – but we are on target for the beginning of the season when our old donkeys will compete against 2013 machinery.

Max Nagl ended his 10 years at KTM with a Nations gold medal and the 25-year-old German now goes for an individual world title aboard Honda World's flagship CRF450R. But despite the first GP being just weeks away when we spoke with Max at the season-opening Mantova Starcross he was still meeting up with some of his new team for the very first time.

"I've been riding my practice bike since the week after Lommel," explains Max. "Then I went with Bobby [team-mate Evgeny Bobryshev] and our mechanics to Japan in November for testing but this is the first time I have been in the factory rig and there are still a couple of people I need to get to know. The impression I've had so far is still very positive.

"It's very important for me to establish a good working atmosphere because that makes the job much easier. Most important of all is my race mechanic Roger Shenton. Until this weekend we had only been together in Japan but those few days in November were enough to show me that Roger is a nice guy and his work is very precise – he is always fully concentrated and checks everything time and again. It is fun to work with him and the mutual friendship and respect is vital for most riders as you must have total confidence in your mechanic and your bike at this level."

Racing for a Japanese factory for the first time brought Max a new experience when they went to Japan to test. "It was a new experience to have so many people around me. At KTM I would be communicating with three people but with Honda it was more like 30. I had separate technicians for the motor, clutch, frame, suspension – everything! It is perhaps extreme but it works and we were not just there to test things for our immediate needs but also to give feedback on projects for future years.

"In one sense it was very stressful because that meant that we couldn't just say what we liked and what we didn't – we had to say why we felt that way for both positives and negatives and how it could be improved so that the engineers could work out how everything was working. Everything is meticulously noted down and analysed for future development.

"Obviously Bobby and I discussed everything amongst ourselves later and found out that we had similar feelings about most things but during testing we each had our own set of technicians who in turn would discuss our feedback amongst themselves and if we each came separately to the same opinion that was a guarantee that everything was okay."

The intensity of the tests with Honda and Showa left little time for tyre testing in Japan and the switch to Dunlop brings another new challenge. "I am still very much in the learning process with the tyres. At Pirelli we only ever had one tyre for each type of ground but with Dunlop we have three front and four rears to choose from. But the team already have experience with this and are able to advise me. That brings us back to the mutual trust and up until now their advice has been spot on."

>>



Max and Xavier Boog go bar to bar in Mantova



RED BULL

AFTER A DECADE WITH KTM MAX NAGL'S HOPING FOR EVEN GREATER SUCCESS WITH THE HONDA WORLD TEAM IN THIS YEAR'S MX1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP - LET THE DOGFIGHTS BEGIN...

Words and photos by Alex Hodgkinson



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Winning the MXdN in Lommel



Max is making new friends at Honda



After spending so long on KTMs Max looks remarkably settled on the new Honda

In the fortnight prior to Mantova Max had, like so many riders in Italian-based factory teams, been testing on the island of Sardinia. "You can ride every day. It rains a lot but the island has a mild climate with temperatures around 12 degrees each day at this time of the year and the ground is sandy so that the ground dries up pretty fast. I only had my practice bike there – a production bike with Showa factory forks – so this weekend is the first time I will ride the 2013 factory bike which has been developed on the basis of our feedback in November.

"I was fascinated to see just how good it is – and I am not disappointed. The thing you notice immediately is that the factory bike is much lighter and handles even better. In fact I have changed my riding style on the Honda. It feels

so easy to ride that I didn't even realise until I watched the videos which my partner Sabrina had made. The Honda has much more weight on the front and I can stand over the bars where as on the KTM I had to put my weight over the rear wheel.

"The biggest difference between production and factory is the sheer power of the motor and the way in which it comes in. It has always been my style to ride on the throttle – that's why I hated MX2 – and a surplus of power suits me down to the ground. As they say 'the throttle works both ways' and we have even fitted a harder spring to give me an even finer feeling."

First time out on the Honda and Max recorded a victory in the qualification race against rival GP factory teams. "Yeah, that was

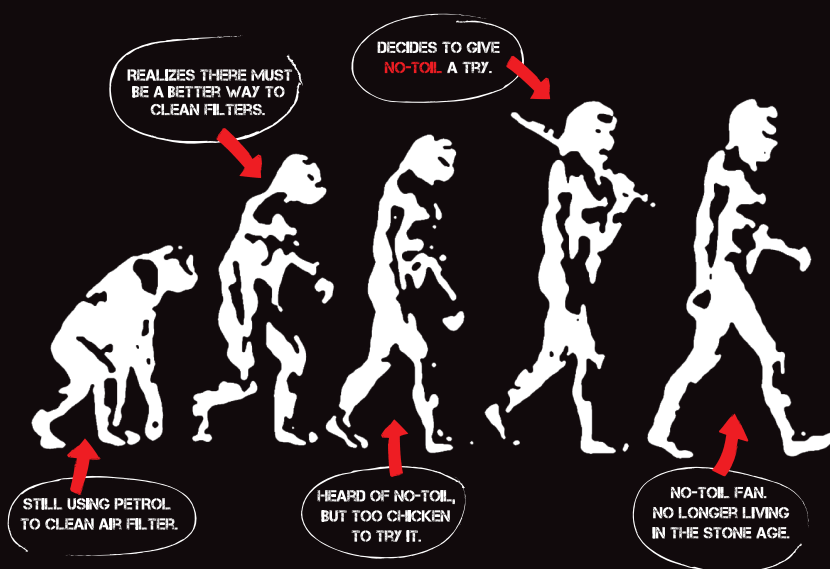
good for me as a weight dropped off my shoulders straight away. You can test forever and have a good feeling but until you have to ride in direct competition with your main rivals you always have that lingering doubt in the back of your mind – that race was a great boost for me.

"I was quickly able to snatch the lead, move away and control the race from the front – I was even able to slacken my pace after a few laps and still maintain the gap. One of my strengths has always been my starting ability and I got to the first turn in front but we knew already that we need to improve to holeshot on a regular basis and this was confirmed on race day when I only took one start out of three.

"I am still getting used to the clutch and we have to work on a good solution for me – >>



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MX1 DOGFIGHT!

CAN NAGL SHOOT DOWN CAIROLI?

"After taking four titles in a row nobody can deny that Tony is setting the benchmark in MX1 GP racing so it will be difficult to beat him. No champion in any sport is there for the taking but just like anybody else he can be beaten!"

"Four years without a significant injury is a rarity in our sport particularly for somebody who rides like he does – he doesn't exactly have the most laidback style and is always aggressive and taking risks although I don't wish him or anybody else any harm. I want to beat him on the track, fair and square and with the support I now have here at Honda World I have the best opportunity to do just that!"



On his way to an historic German win in the MXdN

even at KTM I needed different settings to the other riders in the team. We are pretty sure we know what we have to alter in the clutch but we simply didn't have the possibility to do it here at the track."

Next question, Max, how's the back?

"It's okay. I can still feel it but they told me from the word go that that would be the case and I will have to put up and deal with it for the rest of my life. It doesn't affect my racing and the feeling is stable. I will go for a check up after Thailand but I am sure there is nothing to worry about."

In the past Max has sometimes been 'too fast too early' and blown himself out by late summer. "Yeah, the first time in 2007 it was necessary to make an impact and land the factory ride but I now know from experience that you cannot push too early and I can control it. I'm probably about 70 per cent on the bike at the moment but my physical condition is good without pushing it too far. I aim to be approaching peak fitness around the end of May – from there I can maintain it for

the rest of the season. I had a short 2012 season because of my back but it was good that I already had a holiday booked which gave me a fortnight off in October.

"Hugo Amerika will still be responsible for my physical fitness programme but I have a new guy to work out the plan for my bike time. Stefan Everts helped me with that in the past but I have done it on my own for the last couple of years. Now I am working with Stefan Dirnhofer – he races motocross himself and is a qualified trainer."

But the big question everybody has been waiting to hear an answer to is his feeling towards KTM after being sacked last summer.

"I never had a problem with KTM – just the last three years in an Italian team with De Carli. It had nothing to do with it being an Italian team – that's where I am now and at Honda World everything runs clean as a bell – but the fact is that the relationship between De Carli and Toni is so tight that the other rider in the team has the feeling that he'll not be treated equally. >>





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I never knew if I was getting everything with De Carli. I simply could not accept that. I race to win, not to come second, and the set-up at De Carli simply didn't work out. I'm still friends with Tony. We never had a problem with each other from a personal point of view but he is the number one in the team – and he needs that."

There was a certain irony in the fact that it was left to Stefan Everts to hand Max his cards.

"The whole thing just got too complicated in the end. Claudio was my boss but I wanted to carry on working with Stefan – but the team didn't want that. There was just so much stress in the end and it wasn't working out. I am just glad that we split. Now I have a new chance, a new team, a new motor cycle and here at Honda World Bobby and I are treated equally. You need that to go racing!

"And just a word about the way I got told I was out at the end of the year – just a couple of days before I had my first race back from injury. A lot of people were very negative about that at the time and I have to admit that I was too but looking back it was the best thing that could happen and I will be forever grateful to Pit Beirer that he let me know so early in the year that my services would be longer required at the end of the season.

"It gave me the chance to speak to other teams – if they had not told me until the autumn



A battle with Desalle ended in disaster for Max at Mantova



Killer holeshots come as standard



then all of the team places would have been filled and I would not have had this opportunity with Honda. KTM and I have parted on good terms and my relationship to Pit is as great as ever. I must also be grateful to KTM that they agreed to release me from my contract straight after the Nations so that I could start with the Honda test programme in private."

A major sticking point when Max was negotiating with Honda at the end of last season was Red Bull and their emblem was not on his helmet at Mantova. "We're still working on it and all sides are optimistic that we can still find a solution. There is still a chance but only for me – not for Bobby or the entire team."

With an 18 race GP calendar many riders will be using the free weekends for a break but not Max. "I need to race regularly. In 2011 I only raced the GPs and it didn't work. I won't race a complete series away from the GPs but I will

contest selected rounds of the ADAC Masters and the Belgian championship."

It had been intended to use the Italian International series as part of the testing programme before the opening GP but the horror crash with Clement Desalle as they disputed the lead in the final moto at Mantova killed that plan.

"Initial scans at a local hospital revealed only heavy bruising but the team's doctors from Padova University have found two fractures in my left hand as well as a pulled ligament. I had a cast put on my hand back in Belgium and after that I will have intensive physio. It doesn't look like I will get to race again before Qatar and it's a bummer to miss the testing programme but I should be okay. Obviously I'm disappointed that this has happened but that's part of racing. For me it's a racing incident with nobody to blame – the world title is not won at the first GP."



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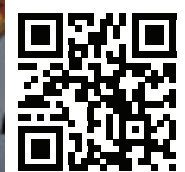
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Spanish Inquisition!

WE GIVE FMX STAR DANY TORRES
A REET GOOD GRILLING...

Words and photos by **Ricky Monti**

There's no denying that Dany Torres is one of the standout stars on the X-Fighters World Tour and the Spanish sensation has now won no fewer than six individual events as well as one overall World Tour title. We hooked up with Dany at his own personal training ground where he was practising his moves with up n' coming Mexican Erick Ruiz – here's what he had to say...

DBR: Okay, everyone knows your name from the Red Bull X-Fighters but tell us a little bit more about yourself...

DT: "I'm Dany Torres and I am 25 years old. I live with my family in Arahal, Spain which is near Seville in the south west of the country. I've been riding motorbikes for 20 years and freestyle for the past 10 years."

DBR: How did your passion for riding motorbikes begin?

DT: "I've loved bikes since I was a child. I was three when my parents took me to a shop on the

Day of Kings and bought me a battery powered motorbike – that's when I started riding. I raced motocross as I grew up and then eventually moved on to FMX."

DBR: How did that come about?

DT: "It was when I was 15 and it all began when Javi Gonzalez – an event promoter – gave me an opportunity and I have been an MX/SX/FMX rider since then. I started motocross training in my town and afterwards on my own FMX circuit. From that day on I was always able to train in my home town."

DBR: How do you feel that FMX has changed during the years?

DT: "Well the tricks and even the events have changed a lot. The events are much more professional and there are now tricks that used to be unimaginable – front flip, double backflip, body varials etc. I think that different tricks will continue to be invented and the level of the sport will continue to rise."

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Erick Ruiz will be a force to be reckoned with real soon



The Mexican!

A QUICK FIRE CHAT WITH YOUNG GUN ERICK RUIZ...

Also training at Dany's compound we found young Mexican freestyler Erick Ruiz who has found a full on approach to FMX after seeing a round of the X-Fighters in Mexico City...

DBR: Hi Erick tell us a little bit about yourself and how you started riding?

ER: "I was born in Mexico City. My father gave me my first bike when I was nine years old and I'd go riding in the mountains like two times a month. The next year I progressed to a CR85 and I started doing some motocross and enduro."

"In 2005 the X-Fighters came to Mexico City for the first time and I loved the show very much so after that I contacted Johan Nungaray and he introduced me to the Fenollar brothers who helped me out and that's how I started jumping on my 85."

"As soon as I turned 15 I moved to a 125cc bike and this was when I started taking things very seriously and I dropped out of school to practice every day. For the next few months I rode every day learning all the tricks I can do now."

DBR: How is the FMX scene in Mexico?

ER: "There are not so many riders to ride with and not so many sponsors. My riding spot is 9,000 feet above sea level so dirt bikes don't run very good there. The riding scene is good though because there are just a few riders doing FMX which means there are a lot of shows for everyone."

DBR: What do your friends think about it all?

ER: "It's funny! They are still at school and I'm travelling around the world doing what I love to do, getting paid and meeting cool people. I remember when I dropped out of school almost everyone was telling me that I would fail and also that I could not make a living riding dirt bikes! I trusted myself though and here I am."

DBR: Why are you here in Spain with Dany Torres?

ER: "I'm here to land the backflip but the weather is pretty bad so we can't ride his place where the foam pit is. Instead I'm just trying to enjoy myself and learn a lot of other things from him."

DBR: Have you learnt much from other riders over the years?

ER: "I've done another clinic with Dany Torres back in 2007 and I went to California in March 2011 to practice with Lance Coury, Mat Rebeaud and Rich Kearns – that was my first time riding seriously with pro riders. That July I went to Switzerland to practice and do the Free4style show with Mat Rebeaud. I've also been to New Zealand to practice with Levi Sherwood but I crashed pretty hard on that trip."

DBR: What would it mean to you to ride in the X-Fighters one day?

ER: "That's the event that made me want to ride FMX so the day I get to ride it will be a sick day!"

DBR: Who are your favourite riders?

ER: "I admire a lot of riders but particularly Tom Pages for style, Dany Torres for all-round perfection, Mat Rebeaud because he's so smooth and you can't beat Levis Sherwood's extension."

DBR: Do you have any tattoos?

ER: "Yes but just one. It says 'LTD' which means Living The Dream."

DBR: So you are living the dream... what is your target for this year?

ER: "Just to ride as many events, shows and competitions as I can. I also want to be healthy and enjoy every single day I ride my dirt bike."

DBR: Your name is almost synonymous with Red Bull X-Fighters and in 2011 you were tour champion. What was it like the first time you rode in one?

DT: "The first time I rode in the Red Bull X-Fighters it was a dream come true and the first victory was something I could not believe – it was great to win among such high-level riders. The relationship between the riders is good, we get along and have fun but on the track we are all rivals."

DBR: What was the best event of the 2012 tour?

DT: "For me it is always the Madrid Las Ventas one. The Madrid audience is unique and I love riding in that plaza because the fans and the layout are the best."

DBR: You've been competing in the X-Fighters for a long time – what changes have you seen?

DT: "Many things have changed – the riders, circuits, cities. Each time we see different things, new jumps, new tracks, new rules and for me it's a great tournament – the best tournament in the world."

DBR: What about the X Games?

DT: "I've been in the X Games four times. That was another dream come true to be in these events and to win a bronze medal too because it's every rider's dream to be an X Games medallist."

DBR: This year there will be more X Games events including one in Barcelona – will you go?

DT: "I would like to go to all events including the X Games and be ready to do my best. I strive to be an X Games medallist and if it's gold or silver then that's even better."

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DANY'S BEST...

Food: "Pasta."

Drink: "Red Bull."

Music: "Hip hop and flamenco."

FMX rider: "Travis Pastrana."

Event: "Madrid X-Fighters."

Right way up or upside down
Dany's got style for miles



DBR: A lot of riders – including yourself – are changing from two-stroke to four-stroke machines. Why is this and how's it working out for you so far?

DT: "This year I changed to a four-stroke because at times last year I felt that I needed more power. I feel very comfortable and hopefully I'll have a good season with the four-stroke bike."

DBR: What is your normal day like?

DT: "Well, I get up and eat a little breakfast and then I go training on the bike. When I finish I return home to eat and then train some more in the afternoon but before that I have a coffee. On days that I don't train in the afternoon I go cycling or to the gym and after a shower I have dinner."

DBR: Do you follow a special diet at all?

DT: "Not at the moment but I always eat sensibly."

DBR: How do you prepare for a big event?

DT: "I try to stay calm and concentrate on what's ahead. I often listen to music and think about the rounds and what tricks I need to do to progress through. I usually also ask god for everything to go well – that I have no falls."

DBR: It's a dangerous sport – how do your family feel about what you do?

DT: "We have a very good relationship. In truth we understand each other and they always support me in everything. I have great support from my father and my brother and they both come to the major events around the world."

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Josh Gilbert will be looking for more wins in 2013



A whole heap of biggies talent moves up to MX2 this year

MX2 STEW

MORE TOP YOUTH RIDERS THAN EVER ENTER THE MAXXIS MIX...

This year's Maxxis MX2 series pops its cork at FatCat Motoparc on March 17 and the series has a supercharged start with three rounds running in the opening month of the season. Eyeing up the more than full list of runners I reckon any number have a healthy chance of grabbing a heat win. A few of that number might need a bit of a flier from the gate but otherwise it looks like there are no clear favourites – it's totally up for grabs!

Fraser Wakeford, Chris Bayliss, Joe Bamfield and Rob Muscat all went well last term while Matthew Callaghan, Rob Davidson, Brad Todd, Corie Southwood, Liam Knight, Connor Clark, Tom Neal and Oli Osmaston all know each other's game inside out. And finally four more with a better than average chance are Jack Kelly, Rickie Roderick and the Irish pairing of Jordan McClelland and Glenn McCormick.

Representing the whipper snappers – and all keen to make a mark if not quite taking a chequered flag – will be Josh Gilbert, Will Keogh, Gradie Featherstone, Todd Kellet, Jay Lamb and Lewis Houghton. The most open championship ever? It really does look that way...

HOT DATES!

MX2

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|-------------|----------|-----------------|
| Round one | March 17 | FatCat Motoparc |
| Round two | March 24 | Canada Heights |
| Round three | April 7 | Lyng |
| Round four | May 12 | Milton Park |
| Round five | June 23 | Desertmartin |

BRITISH YOUTH NATIONALS

| | | |
|-------------|------------|-----------------|
| Round one | May 4/5 | Woolley Grange |
| Round two | June 8/9 | Culham |
| Round three | July 13/14 | FatCat Motoparc |
| Round four | Sept 7/8 | Milton Park |

NATIONAL TRUST!

CAN THE BRITISH YOUTH NATIONALS STILL BE RELIED ON?

What the heck is going on? In late January finalised details of the 2013 British Youth Nationals are released then promptly junked with a condensed schedule replacing it! While the ACU/RHL explanation of avoiding date clashes with UEM championships, the poor state of the economy and then offering more bang for your buck in a four round summer series might suit some but for the majority I hardly think it will do anything to help restore the faith.

The rumour mill would suggest one reason only for the latest swerve in direction – namely low registration numbers. A situation of decline that has been on going for a number of years – even when it was still BYMX!

Brand loyalty is key to understanding the

national scene in 2013. The MCF certainly have it sorted with the Elite Youth Cup and now divorced from the BSMA the GT Cup with over 300 registered have retained customer loyalty too. This year's GT Cup as a new venture also making clear that the state of the economy isn't totally to blame either – it's all about popularity!

The old guard in the shape of the ACU youth championship and even the BSMA too at national level could well have run a natural course. Maybe the old guard should now consider an amalgamation to revive flagging fortunes – British Schoolboy Youth MX Championships anyone? Or perhaps another viable option in 2014 would see the GT Cup already running under an ACU license fully upgraded into a British youth championship.





With riders in all classes
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VAMPIRES ROCK REMIXED!

THE UNDEAD KTM CREW GET A RESHUFFLE FOR 2013...

It's not very often that a new fully committed youth MX team pops up offering kids a no strings chance to make the grade while guiding them through the schoolie

championships then on into the pro ranks. This is the basic outline of Steve Steinman's KTM UK backed youth outfit – now into year two of what Steve initially viewed as a five year plan.

The 2013 team will be Scooter Webster on a 125, David Keet BW85, Jack Grayshon and Ozzie Murray on 65s and Harvey Cashmore in the 50cc Autos. With the National season just about to jump out of the box Rage cornered Steve and posed a few questions.

Rage: Hi Steve tell me why you wanted to run a youth MX team?

SS: "I was told more than once that I must be mad to take on a youth MX team but I was fortunate enough to get support from KTM UK as a youth racer myself and at the time I noticed what Team Green were able to do for youth. My aim has always been to put something back into our sport in the same meaningful way – create a solid base of really talented riders and take them forward on to the biggest stage possible."

Rage: How did you get the team up and running?

SS: "In the summer of 2011 I had a clear idea of the riders I wanted to sign but nothing could happen until I had met with KTM MD Shaun Sisterson. The meeting went to plan and I came away with the support and backing I needed to get this idea up and running. My next move was to secure some good sponsors for the team. We needed clothing, oil, tyres and filters etc. The list was endless really and it wasn't going to be easy to convince some of the biggest companies in the country to give free stuff to a brand new team with no track record.

"By the autumn of 2011 Scooter Webster and Will Keogh were on board along with Jack Grayshon and my own boy Ozzie. At the Dirt Bike Show that year I met with potential sponsors and they could see we were professional in our approach and fully focused. Golden Tyre, Motul oil and Shot Clothing were three to sign up early and they are still with us."

Rage: What problems have you encountered?

SS: "Obviously taking on a new venture such as

this there will be logistical problems and they can be a real headache. All are solvable however with a little imagination and tons of effort. The difficult learning curve has been personality management and I'm learning about this one all the time. Every rider and parent combination on my team has to present the right image. If they let me down ultimately they let themselves down and they let the team down. We have had changes in team make up and I believe my five for this year Scooter Webster, David Keet, Jack Grayshon, Ozzie and Harvey Cashmore will all give me 100 per cent effort. Also 100 per cent full respect to the team and honour the terms of their contract."

Rage: In the short history of Vampires Rock have things moved forward in the way you hoped?

SS: "Well what I can say is new sponsors are coming on board at a good rate of knots. Only recently Motul oil have upped their commitment to the team becoming a major backer. With KTM UK plus a raft of quality sponsors now behind me I was determined this year to find the riders that I believe will bring it home for the team and KTM. It's just a pity that my original team of six for 2013 is now a team of five."

Rage: Are you happy with the first year results?

SS: "For sure yes. Scooter won a supercross title for VR KTM and then finished third overall in the toughest Red Bull 85s competition. Will Keogh proved to be amongst the very best too with his third place finish in Maxxis MXY85 – so yes I have to be pleased. Jack and Ozzie showed great promise in last season's auto ranks and as a result we have now moved them into the 65s a year earlier than planned. They will now have three full Junior seasons to prove how good they are. Jack in particular has gone so well this winter I think he could be a real threat in the 65s this year."

Rage: What are the hopes for 2013?

SS: "Realistically Scooter, David and Harvey have every chance of making podium finishes so as a team we have to be confident. Jack and Ozzie won't be letting anyone down in the 65s and they are future investments."

Rage: Cheers Steve, good luck at the races...



Scooter Webster moves
up to the big bikes



David Keet is one to watch
but don't expect to see
him in a mirror

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SPOTLIGHT ON... **CORIE SOUTHWOOD #44**

DOB: 6/10/96 HOMETOWN: CLYDACH VALE SPONSORS: ST BLAZEY MX, ONE INDUSTRIES, RACE FX, APICO, SILKOLENE, SUZUKI GB, EKS BRAND, MARK JONES MOTOCROSS ACADEMY

Back in 2007 Corie Southwood was just one of a sweet group of 65cc racers that included Ben Watson, Michael Eccles, Matty Callaghan, Tom Neal, Rob Davidson and two speedy amigos who have since quit the sport – Jack Heath and Callum Cooper. Also on the start line that year was Connor Clark, Liam Knight and Oliver Osmaston – the '07 gang was uber good.

The EYC launched that year and Ben Watson ultimately claimed championship gold while Corie as series runner-up. In that year's BYMX tournament a championship fifth place resulted, the highlight being a second overall behind winner Watson at Leuchars.

In the same year at the BSMA nationals Corie could well have been crowned champion. By mid season he was well clear of the chasing pack headed by Liam Knight – injury however wrecked that challenge.

Moving into the 85cc ranks and the 2010 season climaxed with a sixth place championship finish in the BYMX series. A damn good return for a first year big-wheel racer when you consider he was now lumped in with the likes of Adam Sterry, Liam Garland, Jack Kelly, Ben Howell and James Harrison – the big-wheel tear up in '10 was mega tough.

2011 could have realistically seen Corie claim BW gold but with ever growing bones a 125cc Husky ride primarily in the BSMA series was now the choice. If you happened to catch any of the 2011 shows you were lucky as they were blistering. The St Blazey machine was good, very good in fact and Corie took it to the limits. Maybe a bit too fast at times as injury blighted the '11 campaign.

Last year and Corie was now hustling a St Blazey RM-Z250 but racing luck was again in short supply. A smashed and dislocated collarbone meant motorcycle emptiness all the way from May until a seventh place finish at Weston in October.

For 2013 Corie is again on St Blazey Suzuki

and for the first time in three years he gets to hook up with most of his former foes from 2007. The Maxxis MXY2 and the British Youth Nationals are the two main championship gigs this year and following his first competitive outing this season Rage caught up with Corie to see how it's all going...

Rage: Hi Corie, it's good to see you back in action. How are the injuries – are they all good now?

CS: "Actually my shoulder still needs an operation to repair some muscle damage. My surgeon seems to think it will wait until the season has finished so yeah it's all good I think. I'm just concentrating on building up some race strength now."

Rage: How are things away from motocross – are you working or at college or still at school?

CS: "Still at school. I'm in year 11."

Rage: Over the years you've had success on KTM, Suzuki and Husqvarna machines – do you have a favourite?

CS: "I have to say that my current bike the RM-Z250 Suzuki is my favourite. I love the way the bike handles and the power it produces makes it incredibly good to ride. The power and handling seems spot on."

Rage: On the subject of favourites can you recall an all-time best race at national level?

CS: "My all-time favourite has to be from the BYMX at Mepal in 2010. I started the race around seventh or eighth and by the end of lap one I was battling for the lead. I pulled into first and then put an 18 second gap between me and the second place finisher – it felt amazing."

Rage: What are your goals for this season?

CS: "I'm determined to stay injury free this year. I also want to be top five in MXY2 and the British Youth Nationals and pushing for wins."

JETSET EDDIE!

WHY DISTANCE IS NO OBSTACLE FOR EDDIE JAY WADE...

Marcus Phelps set a precedent last season when he flew in for every round of the Red Bull Elite Youth Cup and now nine-year-old Eddie Jay Wade intends to follow in the South African's footsteps.

The son of expats, Eddie lives in Los Gallardos near Almeria in the south of Spain and is no stranger to the jet-set lifestyle having flown in for selected rounds of the 2012 Red Bull Elite Youth Cup. His best result was a 12th overall at Hawkstone – despite recording a no-score in the second moto – and in 2013 he's lining up for a full season and aiming to motor his way up the leaderboard.

Fluent in both English and Spanish the Andalucian-born 65cc pilot is a two-wheeled natural who mastered a bicycle at the age of two-and-a-half before moving via a quad and various kids' bikes onto a KTM Pro Junior at the age of five. But his parents wanted to steer him towards a four-wheel career so he concentrated on kart racing for 12 months. Competing against children more than twice his age, he had to carry 29kg of lead to meet minimum weight requirements and although he showed plenty of talent his heart was still set on two wheels.

So at the age of six he made his motocross debut finishing third overall in the Autos in a round of the Murcian regional championship. He went on to finish second in the series despite missing the first two rounds and also posted some impressive results in UK nationals that season.

For 2011 Eddie moved up to the 65cc class racing selected UK meetings as at seven he was too young to race the bigger machine in Spain. Paco Rico, a multi-time Spanish MX and SX champ and Director of Training for the Valencian Motorcycle Federation, then granted special dispensation for Eddie to race and was sufficiently impressed to include him in a small group of riders he trains on a weekly basis.

In 2012 he competed in the Valencian championship – probably the toughest regional championship in Spain – where he finished second. Now, after a solid off-season that's seen him really get to grips with a 65cc machine he's expecting to finish on the podium in the Spanish championship and is aiming to win his class in the Red Bull Elite Youth Cup.

"Eddie has two years left in the Juniors class," says mum Sharon. "But this year is different, he wants to win. He will be flying in for each meeting and then back to school on the Monday – it will be hectic and he has to bring homework with him as we don't want his school work to slip as he is also a grade A student."

Eddie and his family would like to thank his sponsors including Chem-Jet who have helped Eddie from karting, Linbrooke Ltd, Fly Racing, Golden Tyre Italia and engine tuners MJW Specialists.



GOT A STORY FOR RAGE?

THEN CONTACT OUR YOUTH EDITOR MIKE GURNEY AT MIKEGURNEY55@YAHOO.CO.UK





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DUST UP!

Clement Desalle's no stranger to danger and if there's one thing the MX Panda loves more than eating it's getting into a bar bating battle with one of his peers. That's why he's delighted that the moment he's been waiting for all winter – that's the opening GP of the season – is finally here! It's time to go racing.



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